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Death Notice: Gladys Dirks

Gladys Dirks, 100, of Groton fell asleep Monday, May 23, 2016 at Golden Living Center, Groton. Services are pending for Thursday with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Fr. Kelly celebrates 40 years

Celebrating 40 years of priesthood in honor of Fr. Mike Kelly at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, 803 North 1st Street, Groton. Please join us for an Open House on June 12th from 2-4 pm with a short program at 3pm. Hors d'oeuvres and cupcakes will be served.

Tuesday, May 24

Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes, vegetables, buttermilk biscuits, banana pudding with bananas.

Birthdays: Noah Tullis • Blake Merkel • Katie Anderson

9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Vacation Bible School
10:00am: United Methodist Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, May 25

Senior Menu: Scalloped potatoes with ham, peas, sunset salad, oatmeal raisin cookie, whole wheat bread.

Anniversary: Troy and Rhonda Carda

Birthdays: Jon Voss • JR Johnson • Kayla Fordham • Joni Groeblichhoff • Peggy DeHoet • Chris Kassube, Jaela Flihs • Sandy Knudson

7:00am: United Methodist Men's Bible Study

9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Vacation Bible School with program at 6 pm: 12:00pm: Kiwanis meets at the Community Center

Thursday, May 26

Senior Menu: Hot turkey combo, mashed potatoes and gravy, 7 layer salad, fruit.

Birthdays: • Heather McDonald • Stephanie Vedvei • Beth Gustafson • Drake Peterson

10:00am: Girls Golf at Sisseton

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

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Groton Pool Summer 2016

★ **Pool opens for the season: May 30** ★

Season Passes: Family Pass (must be immediate family only - max 10) = \$100.00 (Immediate Family = Mother, Father, Biological Children, Adopted Children, and Step Children living in one household)

Special Vacation Family Pass (up to 5 persons for 1 week) = \$30.00

Senior Pass (62 & Over) = \$30.00

Adult Pass (18-61yrs) = \$60.00

Youth Pass (6-17 yrs) = \$40.00

Youth Pass (0-5yrs) = \$20.00

Lap Swim Pass - \$4.00 per session or \$30.00 per summer

Aerobics Pass - \$4.00 per session or \$30.00 per summer

Lap AND Aerobic Pass - \$50.00 per summer

*Any child under 6yrs must have an adult (at least 18yrs of age) with them when they are in attendance. See Managers for more information.

***ALL PATRONS HAVE TO PAY TO GO INSIDE THE POOL AREA. THIS IS NO DIFFERENT THAN GOING TO ANY OTHER FACILITY OR EVENT TO WATCH THE ACTIVITY/EVENT.**

Daily Admission Per Session: Seniors (62 and Over) = \$3.00 Adults (18-61) = \$5.00

Youth (6-17 yrs) = \$3.00 Youth (0-5yrs) = \$1.00

HOURS

Open Swim Daily: 1:00 - 4:50pm & 6:40 - 8:50pm

Family Swim is every Saturday and Sunday from 5:45 - 6:30 (each child must have a family member/parent with them who is 18 yrs or older - This is a great family time!

FUN Night is every Friday from 6:40-8:50pm - ALL pool toys are allowed at this time!

Adult Water Aerobics: Monday thru Thursday - 8:00am - 8:45am AND 5:45pm - 6:30pm

Adult Lap Swim: Monday thru Thursday - 7am - 8am & 5pm - 5:45pm - Friday 7am-8am & 5pm-6:30pm Saturday and Sunday - 5pm - 5:45pm

*Hours are subject to change

Pool Rental for Private Parties: - \$150.00 - 2 hours which includes 2 lifeguards

Swimming Lessons: \$20.00 per two-week session - due on first day or prior to first day of lessons, payable at the pool

Mon - Thurs with Friday being a rain/make-up day

Session 1- June 6 - 16

Session 2 - June 20 - June 30

Session 3 - July 11 - July 21

Private Lessons - \$10.00 per 30 minutes with a minimum of 5 lessons and a maximum of 10 consecutive lessons during non-open swim times.

*All parents must provide an accurate phone number to call in case of inclement weather for possible cancellations



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Gas Prices Hit 2016 Highs Heading into Memorial Day

South Dakota's Pump Price Climbs Seven cents in Seven Days

Average pump prices rose seven cents over the last seven days across South Dakota, climbing to their highest level of the year, according to FuelGaugeReport.AAA.com.

	Today	Last Week	Change	Apr. 25	Change	Last year
Aberdeen	\$2.187	\$2.129	\$0.058	\$2.013	\$0.174	\$2.601
Brookings	\$2.278	\$2.238	\$0.040	\$2.159	\$0.119	\$2.736
Huron	\$2.149	\$2.207	-\$0.058	\$2.138	\$0.011	\$2.613
Mitchell	\$2.169	\$2.115	\$0.054	\$2.064	\$0.105	\$2.564
Pierre	\$2.302	\$2.242	\$0.060	\$2.173	\$0.129	\$2.783
Rapid City	\$2.256	\$2.226	\$0.030	\$2.135	\$0.121	\$2.692
Sioux Falls	\$2.184	\$2.107	\$0.077	\$2.010	\$0.174	\$2.510
Vermillion	\$2.266	\$2.149	\$0.117	\$2.109	\$0.157	\$2.573
Watertown	\$2.269	\$2.184	\$0.085	\$2.174	\$0.095	\$2.657
Yankton	\$2.265	\$2.186	\$0.079	\$2.042	\$0.223	\$2.537
South Dakota	\$2.250	\$2.181	\$0.069	\$2.098	\$0.152	\$2.622

Gas prices are at their highest point for the year as we approach the Memorial Day holiday, and the national average has increased for 12 days in a row. Today's average of \$2.28 per gallon is up six cents per gallon on the week and 15 cents per gallon on the month. Despite this increase, drivers remain on target to pay the lowest prices for the Memorial Day holiday since 2005. AAA projects more than 38 million Americans will travel this Memorial Day weekend, which is an increase of 700,000 compared to a year ago. That is the second-highest Memorial Day travel volume on record and the most since 2005. Nearly 34 million (89 percent) holiday travelers will drive to their Memorial Day destinations, an increase of 2.1 percent over last year.

Quick Stats

- The nation's top five most expensive markets are: California (\$2.80), Hawaii (\$2.66), Washington (\$2.59), Alaska (\$2.58) and Nevada (\$2.49).
- The nation's top five least expensive markets are: Mississippi (\$2.05), South Carolina (\$2.06), Arkansas (\$2.06), Texas (\$2.07) and Missouri (\$2.07).
- For the first time since August 2015, drivers in every state and Washington, D.C. are paying averages above \$2 per gallon.

Midwest

Gasoline inventories decreased for the 14th consecutive week in the Midwest. Interruptions in crude oil deliveries to refineries in the Midwest, due to fires in the Canadian Oil Sands, are challenging the ability of the local market to meet growing demand. Pump prices continue to swing in the region and the Midwestern states of Ohio (+13 cents), Michigan (+13 cents) and Indiana (+11 cents) lead the nation, posting the largest week-over-week increases in the price of gas. Minnesota (+23 cents), Michigan (+21 cents), Wisconsin (+20 cents) and Ohio (+20 cents) rank in the nation's top 10 largest monthly increases, and every state in the region is posting double-digit increases over this time period.

Planned and unplanned refinery maintenance is also causing prices to fluctuate in the region. Output at BP's Whiting, Indiana plant and the BP-Husky plant in Toledo, Ohio are expected to be limited for the next few weeks. Growing gasoline demand within the region, combined with supply challenges, are likely to contribute to prices remaining volatile leading into the summer driving season.

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Oil Market Dynamics

Global crude oil prices recently moved higher due to unexpected declines in oil production in various parts of the world, such as Canada and Nigeria. This rally was short lived and the market once again reflected a bearish sentiment following reports of a strengthening U.S. dollar and questionable global demand. The United States' role as swing producer is also garnering attention, with domestic production falling to its lowest levels since September 2014. Market watchers are paying close attention to how domestic producers are responding to changes in the global price of crude and the impact of their actions on the global oil prices. At the close of Friday's formal trading session on the NYMEX, WTI closed out the week down 41 cents to settle at \$47.75 per barrel.

Motorists can find current gas prices along their route with the free AAA Mobile app for iPhone, iPad and Android. The app can also be used to map a route, find discounts, book a hotel and access AAA roadside assistance. Learn more at AAA.com/mobile.

AAA is North America's largest motoring, leisure travel and safety advocacy organization with more than 55 million members. A not-for-profit, fully tax-paying auto club, AAA South Dakota serves its 93,800 South Dakota members with emergency roadside assistance, auto travel counseling and a wide range of personal insurance, worldwide travel and financial services at branch offices across South Dakota and online at AAA.com.

Don't Let Your Last Memory of Memorial Day be a DUI AAA provides an alternative for impaired drivers.

AAA South Dakota, May 23, 2016 – AAA's Topsy Tow service is being offered by the auto club to those who feel unsafe behind the wheel after drinking over the long Memorial Day weekend. The driver receives a free ride home and so does the car.

"Let's face it, holidays are a time to celebrate and social drinking is often a big part of that," said Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota. "But the sad truth is that alcohol continues to play a role in far too many crashes on South Dakota's roadways. Topsy Tow is an easy alternative. It's free, confidential and open to AAA members and non-members alike."

The service is available over the weekend from 6 p.m. Friday, May 27 until 4 a.m. Tuesday, May 31 in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Mitchell and Yankton.

To access Topsy Tow, call 1-800-222-4357 (AAA-HELP) and ask for a Topsy Tow. The service is offered free, no questions asked. AAA will give you, up to one more person, and your car a ride home, within a 15-mile radius from the point of pick-up, anytime during the 82-hour period.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**



**Larry Zimmerman
Secretary**

Let us Never Forget Our Heroes

Memorial Day stands as a solemn American tradition that honors the sacrifices of past generations. Memorial Day is a day we dedicate to those who fell in defense of the ideals, beliefs, and values we hold sacred.

As a nation we need to remember these heroes and their sacrifice. We must remember what they did, why they did it, and appreciate what it means to us personally and as a nation.

America has been blessed as no other country in the history of the world. The sacrifices of our armed forces have given us the security and freedom in which to grow and flourish as a nation.

Remembering those sacrifices and what they have meant to our nation is the duty of the living.

That is why the ritual decorating of graves after the Civil War became so widespread so quickly. And with each successive generation came more wars. Hundreds of thousands more young American lives were lost on the battlefields and the concept of Memorial Day became a tradition renewed by each generation's sacrifice.

On this Memorial Day, let us all pledge to renew our dedication to the true meaning of Memorial Day. Let us all enjoy the lives we lead because of the generations of young Americans who gave their lives so that all of us could live in freedom and prosperity. Let us continue to educate our children about the price paid for their freedom.

Our greatest duty to the men and women who have died in service to our country is to never, ever forget what they have done for each of us – and what they have done for us as a nation. They led colorful, vivid, and passionate lives and we owe it to them and their families to honor and pay tribute to their sacrifice.

Larry Zimmerman, Secretary

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

South Dakota sales tax increases on June 1

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota state sales and use tax rate will increase from 4 percent to 4.5 percent on June 1.

The new state sales and use tax rate applies to sales and rentals of tangible personal property, products transferred electronically, services, farm machinery purchases and amusement devices.

The rate increase also applies to transactions which occur within the special jurisdictions on Indian country. Municipal sales taxes are not affected by this tax increase.

"During the planning and implementation for the new sales tax rate, our goal has been to make the transition as easy as possible for taxpayers," Department of Revenue Secretary, Andy Gerlach said.

Doug Schinkel, Director of Business Tax said, "Simply put, all transactions that are currently subject to the 4 percent state sales or use tax rate, will be subject to the 4.5 percent sales or use tax rate effective June 1, 2016."

Taxpayers with questions may call the South Dakota Department of Revenue Taxpayer Assistance Center at (800) 829-9188.

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Today in Weather History

1894 - Six inches of snow blanketed Kentucky. Just four days earlier as much as ten inches of snow had fallen across Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. Six days earlier a violent storm had wrecked nine ships on Lake Michigan. (David Ludlum)

1930 - A tornado touched down near the town of Pratt, KS, and traveled at the incredibly slow speed of just 5 mph. (The Weather Channel)

1940 - Hail fell near Ada OK to a depth of six to eight inches, and rainfall runoff left drifts of hail up to five feet high. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Severe thunderstorms in southwest Texas spawned a couple of tornadoes near Silverton, and produced golf ball size hail east of the town of Happy. Thunderstorms also produced large hail and damaging winds in Louisiana and Texas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the southeastern U.S. Thunderstorm winds gusted to 88 mph at Columbia, NC. Baseball size hail was reported near Tifton GA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather across the Upper Midwest through the day and night. Thunderstorms spawned 30 tornadoes, and there were 158 reports of large hail and damaging winds. A strong (F-3) tornado caused five million dollars damage at Corning, IA, and a powerful (F-4) tornado caused five million dollars damage at Traer, IA. Thunderstorm winds gusting to 88 mph killed one person and injured five others at Stephenville, WI. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Severe thunderstorms spawned two dozen tornadoes from Montana to Oklahoma. Four tornadoes carved a 109-mile path across central Kansas. The third of the four tornadoes blew 88 cars off a 125-car train off the track, stacking them three to four cars high in some cases, and the fourth tornado caused 3.9 million dollars damage. The third tornado injured six persons who were trying to escape in vehicles. A woman was "sucked out" of a truck and said that at one time she was "airborne, trying to run but my feet wouldn't touch the ground". She also saw a live deer "flying through their". (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
						
Sunny	20% → 70% Slight Chance T-storms then T-storms Likely	70% T-storms Likely	30% Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny	20% Slight Chance T-storms	40% Chance T-storms
High: 86 °F	Low: 59 °F	High: 77 °F	Low: 55 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 53 °F	High: 76 °F



Warm Temperatures Today

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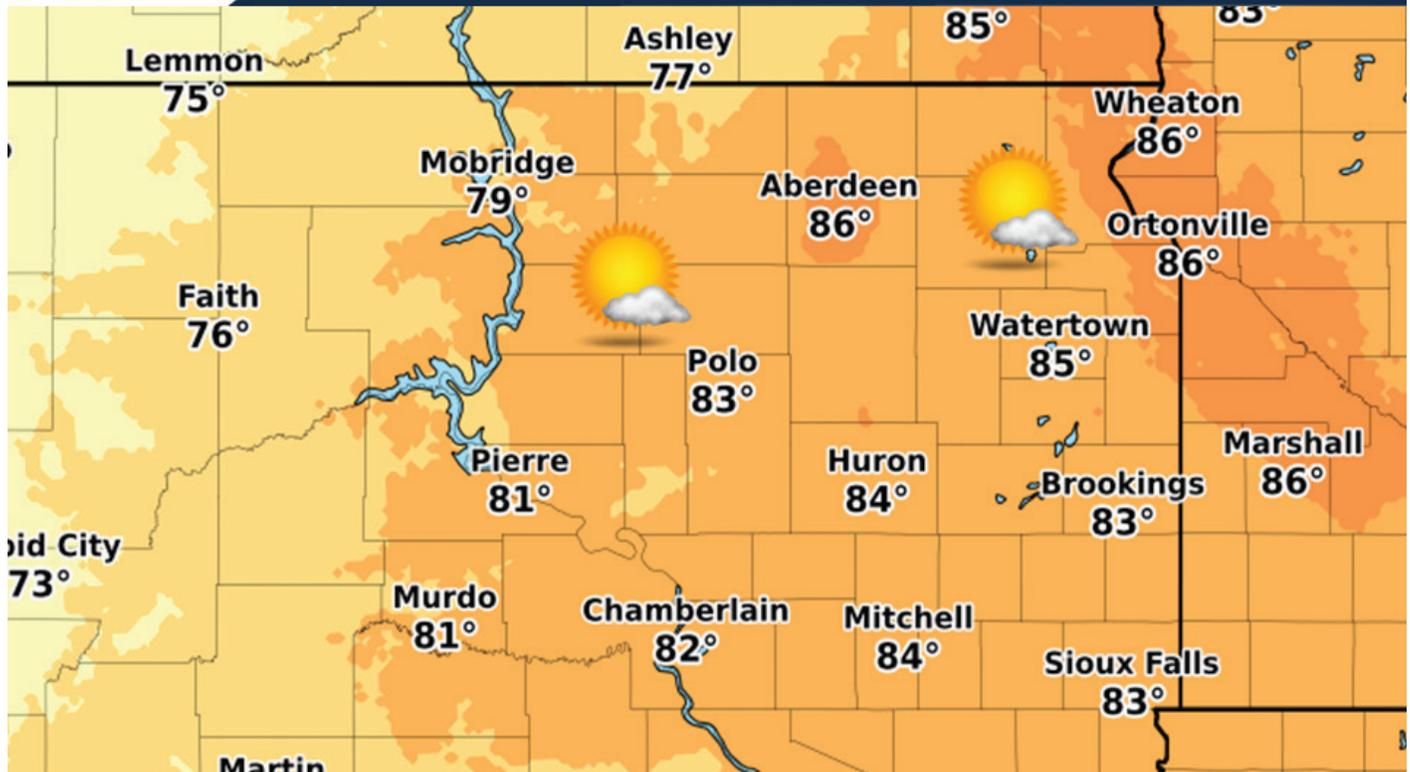
weather.gov/Aberdeen



National Weather Service Aberdeen



@NWSAberdeen



Published on: 05/24/2016 at 5:46AM

Warm temperatures can be expected today with highs in the 80s for many areas. Dry conditions are forecast today, but by this evening and through the overnight hours, showers and thunderstorms will move into central South Dakota and progress eastward across the state.

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Yesterday's Weather

High: 79.9 at 6:15 PM

Low: 57.2 at 6:15 AM

High Gust: 45 at 12:12 AM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 99° in 1926

Record Low: 25 in 1897

Average High: 71°F

Average Low: 47°F

Average Precip in May: 2.44

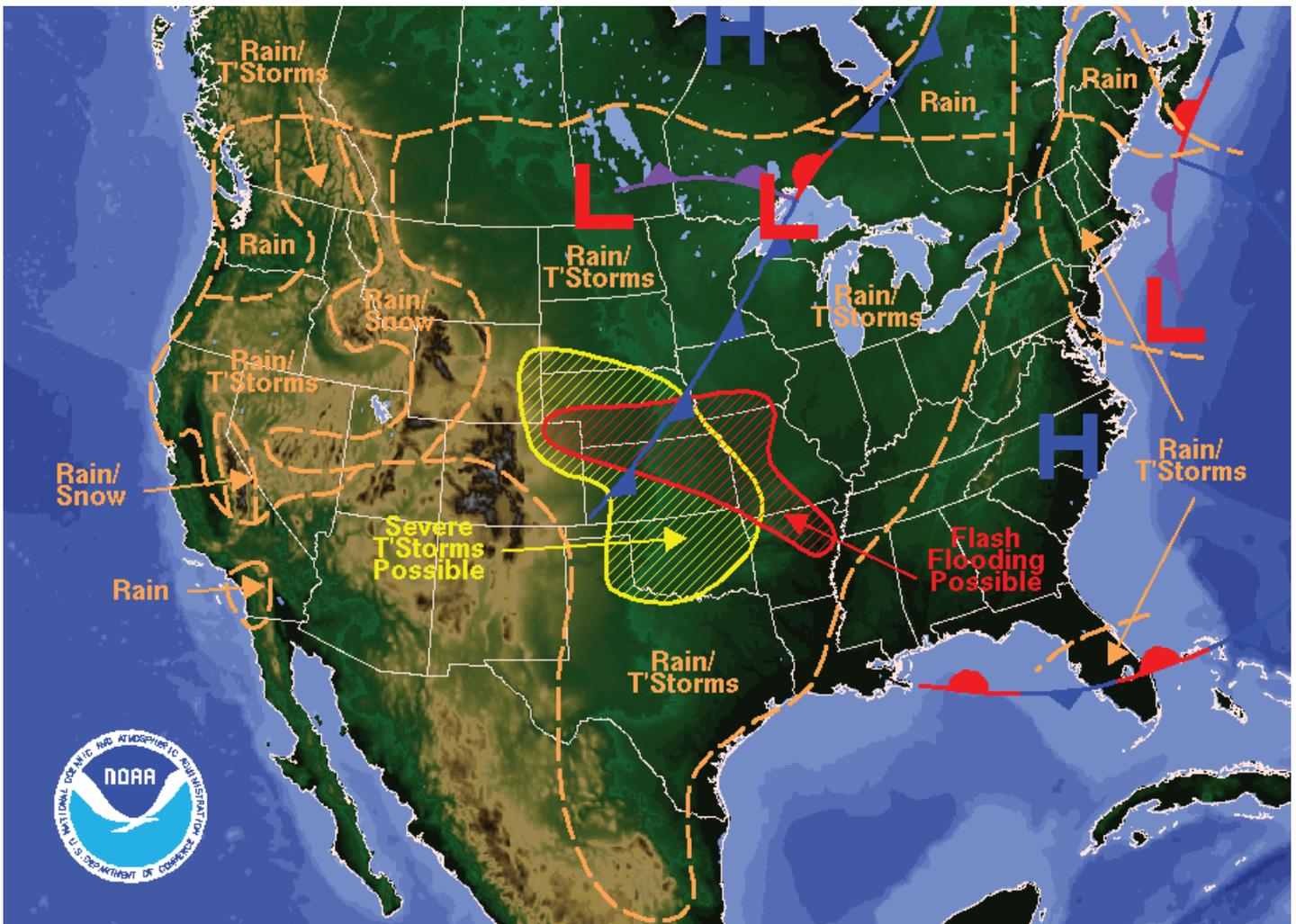
Precip to date in May: 0.39

Average Precip to date: 6.47

Precip Year to Date: 3.78

Sunset Tonight: 9:07 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:52 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Tue, May 24, 2016, issued 4:38 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Sewing was very important to Mrs. Lofting. Whenever she had a moment to spare, she would go to her sewing room and take out her needle and thread and the sewing project she was working on.

But she had a problem. Whenever she was working with a piece of thick, heavy material, the needle she was pushing with her thumb would often pierce it.

One day her sympathetic husband seeing her happiness interrupted with pain became concerned. He went to his shop, found a piece of soft metal and turned it into a bell-shaped covering for her thumb. Jokingly he called it a "thumb-bell." Soon, other seamstresses became aware of the "thumb-bell" and wanted one for their sewing. Now they are called "thimbles" and are found in nearly every home.

What we do when faced with a problem should come as a result of our dependence upon God. James wrote, "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God and He will give it to you." This "wisdom" he is talking about not only means knowledge, but the ability to make wise decisions, gain insight and get us through difficult times. This promise of God is ours to accept and act upon whenever life seems to be beyond us.

Prayer: How gracious of You, Father, to provide Your wisdom to guide us, guard us and grant us answers in all that we do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Flags to fly at half-staff in honor of former legislator

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Dennis Daugaard has ordered flags flown at half-staff at the state Capitol on Wednesday to honor former state legislator Roland Chicoine (SHEEK'-wihn).

Chicoine, of Elk Point, died on Thursday at age 93.

Chicoine served for 20 years in the Legislature. He was a state representative from 1981-87, a state senator from 1987-93 and a state representative again from 1993-2001.

His funeral is Wednesday.

Authorities identify man found dead in house fire near Irene

IRENE, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified a man who died in a house fire near Irene earlier this month.

The Yankton County Sheriff's Office says the body of 59-year-old Dean Gilbertson was found in the rubble of the early morning fire on May 14.

The house was destroyed in the blaze, and authorities used medical records to identify the body. Gilbertson owned the home and was the only occupant.

Investigators are not sure if they will be able to determine the cause of the fire.

South Dakota Indian hospital threatened with funds cutoff

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The U.S. government on Monday threatened to cut off Medicare and Medicaid funding to a government-run hospital in Rapid City — the third South Dakota hospital serving Native Americans that's been found to have serious deficiencies in recent months.

Inspectors with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which administers the government's health care programs for the needy, disabled and elderly, found problems at Sioux San Hospital in Rapid City during an unannounced survey earlier this month. The hospital is run by Indian Health Service, which provides health care to tribal members through a network of hospitals on and off reservations as part of the U.S. government's treaty obligations to Native American tribes.

CMS said the IHS has until June 15 to correct the deficiencies at Sioux San Hospital to avoid losing its ability to bill the government for services provided to Medicare- and Medicaid-eligible patients.

It's the third IHS-run hospital in South Dakota to receive such a threat this year; a fourth hospital in Nebraska was found deficient last year. The problems have prompted tribal leaders and health care policy experts to question the U.S. government's commitment to provide adequate care for tribal members.

At Sioux San Hospital, inspectors determined that patients in the emergency department were not receiving appropriate medical screening examinations. The failures were so concerning that inspectors determined they constituted an "immediate jeopardy" situation, a term used when a hospital's actions — or lack thereof — have caused or are likely to cause serious injury, harm, impairment or death to a patient.

"The Hospital failed to provide a medical screening examination (MSE) that was, within reasonable clinical confidence, sufficient to determine whether or not an Emergency Medical Condition (EMC) existed," according to the report of the inspection conducted between May 10 and 12. The inspectors based their findings on emergency department logs, review of medical records and policies, and interviews with patients, patient representatives and staff.

The IHS in a statement on Monday said it has already begun addressing the issues and has instituted changes including "new leadership, expanded oversight, staff retraining and policy changes."

CMS handed down funding cutoff deadlines earlier this year to IHS-run hospitals on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian Reservations in South Dakota after substandard conditions were uncovered during

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inspections. Those facilities agreed to last-chance remediation plans in April so they could continue billing Medicare and Medicaid.

Before that pair of facilities came under scrutiny, the IHS-administered hospital on Nebraska's Winnebago Reservation was the subject of "immediate jeopardy" findings during a survey last May.

The report on Sioux San Hospital cites the case of a 6-month-old baby who was taken to the emergency department in April with complaints of congestion, cough, runny nose and watery eyes. The attending provider did not ask the mother for the patient's history and diagnosed the boy with a "viral respiratory infection." When the mother brought the baby back 12 hours later, another provider discovered the boy had been born prematurely and had a history of respiratory distress. The boy spent time in intensive care at another facility after having a seizure.

The first provider acknowledged during an interview with inspectors that he would have treated the patient differently had he known about the baby's medical history, the report said.

Members of Congress, including U.S. Sen. John Thune, have begun proposing ways to overhaul the IHS. "It's completely unacceptable and highlights the pervasive problems that have prevented the IHS from focusing on its core mission of providing quality health care to tribal citizens throughout the area," the Republican from South Dakota said.

South Dakota Developmental Center dentist receives honor

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Developmental Center dentist Dave Peterson has been honored for his work by a dental association.

The state Department of Human Services says Peterson was named the "honored guest" at the South Dakota Dental Association's annual conference.

The recognition is awarded to someone who exemplifies exceptional service in dentistry.

South Dakota Developmental Center Interim Director Barb Abeln says Peterson has long advocated for excellence in dental services for people with disabilities. She says Peterson is a well-liked and respected professional.

Peterson has received multiple awards during his career.

Man accused of shooting Rosebud tribal officer indicted

ROSEBUD, S.D. (AP) — A federal grand jury has indicted a man accused of shooting and wounding a tribal officer on the Rosebud Indian Reservation

Linn Cross Dog III faces nine felony counts stemming from two incidents, including the May 11 shooting of Officer Patrick Iyotte. Cross Dog was arrested May 13, the same day a reward in the case was increased to \$10,000.

According to an FBI agent's filing in the case that included witness interviews and statements from law enforcement officials involved in the May 11 incident:

Iyotte pulled over a van in which Cross Dog was riding as part of a routine traffic stop. As the driver was being questioned away from the vehicle, Cross Dog jumped into the driver's seat from the second row and drove away. After a car pursuit, Cross Dog fled from the van on foot. Iyotte caught up and hit him with a baton before Cross Dog turned and shot Iyotte in the forearm, escaping into a grove of trees.

An FBI press release said Cross Dog was taken into custody without incident on May 13. He faces two felony counts from a situation the day of his arrest, according to his indictment.

Cross Dog intends to plead not guilty, said Neil Fulton, head of the federal public defender's office for North Dakota and South Dakota. Iyotte has been discharged from the hospital and is at home resting, said Marlin Enno, chief administrator of Rosebud Sioux Tribe Law Enforcement Services.

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Watertown man claims Dakota Cash jackpot of over \$35K

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lottery officials say a Watertown man has claimed a Dakota Cash jackpot of more than \$35,000.

Travis Carrico claimed the prize Monday. He won the prize after matching all five white balls in the May 4 drawing.

Carrico says he was on vacation in Arizona when he first learned he had the winning ticket. He says he will use the prize to pay bills and will make charitable donations.

The lucky ticket was sold at a Hy-Vee grocery store in Watertown. The store will get almost \$1,800 for the sale.

Dakota Cash is played only in South Dakota. The odds of winning the jackpot are 1 in about 325,000. The jackpot for Wednesday's drawing sits at \$24,000.

Pierre's only licensed extended-hours child care closing

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The only licensed extended-hours child care facility in Pierre is closing.

Little Explorers has been open for a little more than a year, with about 30 employees caring for an average of about 55 children per day. Officials cite a high employee turnover as a reason for its demise.

The facility is open from 5:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. daily, including holidays. It will close at 6 p.m. on June 10.

3 tornadoes reported during severe storms in South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Severe storms that crossed South Dakota led to reports of at least three tornadoes, including one that caused damage.

The National Weather Service says a tornado in Tripp County on Sunday evening prompted reports of downed electrical lines and roof damage.

A tornado also was reported in neighboring Todd County, and across the state in Campbell County. That twister was classified as a landspout tornado, which is the land-based equivalent of a waterspout.

No damage was immediately reported from the tornadoes in Todd and Campbell counties. No injuries were immediately reported from any of the twisters.

The storms also brought strong winds, rain and hail.

Obama pushes for better rights in Vietnam after arms deal

FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

NANCY BENAC, Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — President Barack Obama on Tuesday pressed Vietnam to allow greater freedoms for its citizens, arguing that better human rights would improve the communist country's economy, stability and regional power.

On his second full day in the southeast Asian nation, Obama also met with activists and entrepreneurs as part of a push for closer ties with the fast-growing, strategically crucial country. The visit included the lifting of one of the last vestiges of Vietnam War-era antagonism: a five-decades-old arms sale embargo.

In a speech at the National Convention Center, Obama sought to balance a desire for a stronger relationship with Vietnam with efforts to hold its leadership to account over what activists call an abysmal treatment of government critics.

Nations are more successful when people can freely express themselves, assemble without harassment and access the internet and social media, Obama said.

"Upholding these rights is not a threat to stability but actually reinforces stability and is the foundation of progress," Obama told the audience of more than 2,000, including government officials and students from five universities across the Hanoi area. "Vietnam will do it differently than the United States does ... But there are these basic principles that I think we all have to try to work on and improve."

Freedom of expression is where new ideas happen, Obama said. "That's how a Facebook starts. That's

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how some of our greatest companies began.”

Journalists and bloggers can “shine a light on injustice or abuse” when they are allowed to operate free of government interference or intimidation, he added. And, stability is encouraged when voters get to choose their leaders in free and fair elections “because citizens know that their voices count and that peaceful change is possible. And it brings new people into the system,” Obama said.

Obama also traced the transformation of the U.S.-Vietnamese relationship, from wartime enemies to cooperation. He said the governments are working more closely together than ever before on a range of issues.

“Now we can say something that was once unimaginable: Today, Vietnam and the United States are partners,” he said, adding that their experience was teaching the world that “hearts can change.”

Earlier Tuesday, Obama met with six activists, including a pastor and advocates for the disabled and sexual minorities. He said several others were prevented from coming. “Vietnam has made remarkable strides in many ways,” Obama said, but “there are still areas of significant concern.”

Obama also referred in the speech to China’s growing aggression in the region, something that worries many in Vietnam, which has territorial disputes in the South China Sea with Beijing.

Obama got a round of applause when he declared that “big nations should not bully smaller ones,” an allusion to China’s attempt to push its rivals out of disputed territory. Obama said the United States will continue to freely navigate the region and support the right of other countries to do the same.

After Hanoi, Obama flew to Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon. He visited the Jade Emperor Pagoda, considered one of the most beautiful pagodas in southern Vietnam and a repository of religious documents that includes more than 300 statues and other relics. A strong smell of incense hung in the air as visitors frequently burn incense outside the main temple to announce to the heavens their arrival.

As Obama paused before one statue, a guide explained that if he wanted to have a son, he should pray to her.

“I like daughters,” Obama replied.

Shifting from the historical to the modern, Obama also stopped by the Dreamplex business complex in downtown Ho Chi Minh City, a space for startup entrepreneurs that fits with Obama’s message about the potential benefits of closer ties to Vietnam’s growing economy and its burgeoning middle class.

Obama visited with several entrepreneurs at the modern Dreamplex, learning about a virtual game that helps people recover from nerve injuries and a smart phone that can serve as a laser cutter. But Obama cautioned that you have to “be careful where you point it.”

The meeting gave him another chance to promote the benefits of what he says will be enhanced trade under a 12-nation trade deal that is stalled in Congress and opposed by the leading U.S. presidential candidates. He said the pact, if approved, will accelerate economic reforms in Vietnam, boost its economic competitiveness, open up new markets and improve labor and environmental standards.

During his address, he said the agreement would give Vietnamese workers the right to form labor unions and would prohibit forced and child labor. He also predicted it would lead to greater regional cooperation.

“Vietnam will be less dependent on any one trading partner and enjoy broader ties with more partners, including the United States,” Obama said.

Hawaii could be first to put gun owners in federal database

MARINA STARLEAF RIKER, Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Hawaii could become the first state in the United States to enter gun owners into an FBI database that will automatically notify police if an island resident is arrested anywhere else in the country.

Most people entered in the “Rap Back” database elsewhere in the U.S. are those in “positions of trust,” such as school teachers and bus drivers, said Stephen Fischer of the FBI’s Criminal Justice Information Services Division. Hawaii could be the first state to add gun owners.

“I don’t like the idea of us being entered into a database. It basically tells us that they know where the

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guns are, they can go grab them" said Jerry Ilo, a firearm and hunting instructor for the state. "We get the feeling that Big Brother is watching us."

Supporters say the law would make Hawaii a leader in safe gun laws. Allison Anderman, a staff attorney at the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, said the bill was "groundbreaking," and that she hadn't heard of other states introducing similar measures.

Sen. Will Espero, who introduced the bill, and the Honolulu Police Department said Hawaii could serve as a model for other states if it becomes the first to enact the law.

Yet others say gun owners shouldn't have to be entered in a database to practice a constitutional right.

"You're curtailing that right by requiring that a name be entered into a database without doing anything wrong," said Kenneth Lawson, faculty at the University of Hawaii's William S. Richardson School of Law.

Legal experts say the bill could face challenges, but would probably hold up in court. Recent Supreme Court rulings have clarified states' ability to regulate gun sales, said David Levine, a law professor at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

The bill will undergo a legal review process by departments including the Attorney General's Office, which supported the bill, before Gov. David Ige decides if he will sign it into law, said Cindy McMillan, a spokeswoman for the governor.

The cost to enter names in the database will be covered by a fee paid by gun owners, which wasn't defined in the bill.

Even though other states don't enter gun owners in the database, Honolulu Police Department Maj. Richard Robinson said it will still benefit Hawaii police. Right now, Hawaii gun owners undergo a background check only when they register a gun, so police have no way of knowing if they're disqualified from owning a gun in the future unless they try to register a new firearm.

"We were only discovering things by accident," said Robinson, who helped draft the bill. "They happen to come register another firearm, we run another background check, and then we find out they're a prohibited person."

That happens about 20 times each year, he said.

Some local gun owners say the law confirms their fear that the government would know exactly who and where people keep their firearms.

"This is an extremely dangerous bill. Exercising a constitutional right is not inherently suspicious," said Amy Hunter for the National Rifle Association. "Hawaii will now be treating firearms as suspect and subject to constant monitoring."

Greek police evacuate hundreds from Idomeni refugee camp

COSTAS KANTOURIS, Associated Press

IDOMENI, Greece (AP) — Greek authorities sent hundreds of police into the country's largest informal refugee camp Tuesday to support the gradual evacuation of the Idomeni site on the Macedonian border.

The left-led government has pledged that police will not use force, and says the operation is expected to last about a week to 10 days. Journalists were blocked from covering inside the camp

By about midday 23 buses carrying a total 1,110 people had left Idomeni, heading to new refugee camps in northern Greece, police said, while earth-moving machinery was used to clear abandoned tents. No violence was reported.

Vicky Markolefa, a representative of the Doctors Without Borders charity, said the operation was proceeding "very smoothly" and without incident. "We hope it will continue like that," she said.

The camp, which sprang up at an informal pedestrian border crossing for refugees and migrants heading north to wealthier European nations, was home to an estimated 8,400 people — including hundreds of children — mostly from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

At its peak, when Macedonia shut its border in March, the camp housed more than 14,000, but numbers have declined as people began accepting authorities' offers of alternative places to stay.

In Geneva, UNHCR spokesman Adrian Edwards said the evacuation appeared to be taking place "calmly,"

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and the U.N. refugee agency was sending more staffers to Idomeni.

"As long as the movement of people from Idomeni is ... voluntary in nature (and) that we're not seeing use of force, then we don't have particular concerns about that," he said.

"It often does help move people into more organized sites, when they're willing to move to those places," he added.

In Idomeni, most have been living in small camping tents pitched in fields and along railroad tracks, while aid agencies have set up large marquee-style tents to help house people. Greek authorities have sent in cleaning crews regularly and have provided portable toilets, but conditions have been precarious at best, with heavy rain creating muddy ponds.

Recently the camp had begun taking on an image of semi-permanence, with refugees setting up small makeshift shops selling everything from cooking utensils to falafel and bread.

More than 54,000 refugees and migrants have been trapped in financially struggling Greece since countries further north shut their land borders to a massive flow of people escaping war and poverty at home. Nearly a million people have passed through Greece, the vast majority arriving on islands from the nearby Turkish coast.

In March, the European Union reached an agreement with Turkey meant to stem the flow and reduce the number of people undertaking the perilous sea crossing to Greece, where many have died when their overcrowded, unseaworthy boats sank. Under the deal, anyone arriving clandestinely on Greek islands from the Turkish coast after March 18 faces deportation to Turkey unless they successfully apply for asylum in Greece.

But few want to request asylum in the country, which has been struggling with a deep, six-year financial crisis that has left unemployment hovering at around 24 percent.

Journalists were barred from the camp during the evacuation operation. An estimated 700 police were participating in the operation.

Greek authorities are also eager to reopen a railway line — the country's main freight train line to the Balkans — that runs through the camp and has been blocked by protesting camp residents since March 20.

Anastassios Saxpelidis, a spokesman for Greek transport companies, said Tuesday that the 66-day closure has cost transporters about 6 million euros.

Giorgos Kyritsis, a government spokesman on immigration, said the line should open "in coming days."

The government has been trying for months to persuade people to leave Idomeni and go to organized camps. This week it said its campaign of voluntary evacuations was already working, with police reporting that eight buses carrying about 400 people left Idomeni Sunday. Others took taxis heading to Thessaloniki or a nearby town of Polycastro.

On the eve of the evacuation operation, few at the camp appeared to welcome the news.

"It's not good ... because we've already been here for three months and we'll have to spend at least another six in the camps before relocation," said Hind Al Mkawi, a 38-year-old refugee from Damascus, told The Associated Press on Monday evening.

Abdo Rajab, a 22-year-old refugee from Raqqa in Syria, has spent the past three months in Idomeni, and is considering paying smugglers to be sneaked into Germany.

"We hear that tomorrow we will all go to camps," he said. "I don't mind, but my aim is not reach the camps but to go Germany."

10 Things to Know for Today

The Associated Press

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. WHAT A FORENSICS EXPERT IS SAYING ABOUT EGYPTAIR CRASH

Human remains retrieved from the crash site of Flight 804 suggest there was an explosion on board that may have brought down the aircraft.

2. SANDERS: CONVENTION COULD GET 'MESSY'

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The presidential candidate tells the AP that "democracy is not always nice and quiet and gentle" in his push to make the Democratic Party more inclusive.

3. WHAT OBAMA IS IMPLORING VIETNAM TO DO

The U.S. president presses Hanoi to allow greater freedoms for its citizens, arguing that better human rights would improve the communist country's economy, stability and regional power.

4. GREECE MAKES MOVE ON MIGRANTS

Authorities begin an operation to gradually evacuate the country's largest informal refugee camp of Idomeni on the Macedonian border.

5. HOW MARILYN MOSBY IS BEING PERCEIVED

With a mistrial and an acquittal so far in the Freddie Gray case, Baltimore's top prosecutor is facing criticism for having cast her net too wide in her charges against six city police officers.

6. AS ZIKA SPREADS, FLORIDA TOWN A STUDY IN BUG-BORNE ILLNESS

Rio's successful fight against a dengue fever outbreak in 2013 may be a precursor to what other U.S. communities face as the summer mosquito season begins.

7. COSBY DUE IN PENNSYLVANIA COURT

The entertainer faces a preliminary hearing on a charge of aggravated indecent assault stemming from a 2004 encounter at his home near Philadelphia.

8. HAWAII COULD MAKE GUN HISTORY

The island chain could become the first state to enter gun owners into an FBI database that will automatically notify police if a resident is arrested anywhere else in the country.

9. FACEBOOK DROPS NEWS OUTLET INPUT IN 'TRENDING TOPICS' REVIEW

The social network giant adopted the policy after a backlash over a report saying it suppressed conservative views.

10. WHY WARRIOR MAY HAVE EVADED SUSPENSION

Golden State's Draymond Green has a history of his legs flailing out strangely, which lends some credence to the argument that he didn't intentionally kick Oklahoma City's Steven Adams.

Forensic official: EgyptAir 804 human remains suggest blast

SAM MAGDY, Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Human remains retrieved from the crash site of EgyptAir Flight 804 suggest there was an explosion on board that may have brought down the aircraft in the east Mediterranean, a senior Egyptian forensics official said on Tuesday.

"The logical explanation is that an explosion brought it down," the official told The Associated Press.

The official, who is part of the Egyptian team investigating the crash that killed all 66 people on board the flight from Paris to Cairo early last Thursday, has personally examined the remains at a Cairo morgue. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the information.

All 80 pieces that have been brought to Cairo so far are small. "There isn't even a whole body part, like an arm or a head," said the official, adding that one piece was the left part of a head.

"But I cannot say what caused the blast," he said.

Egyptian authorities have said they believe terrorism is a more likely explanation than equipment failure, and some aviation experts have said the erratic flight reported by the Greek defense minister suggests a bomb blast or a struggle in the cockpit. But so far no hard evidence has emerged.

An independent Cairo daily, al-Watan, quoted an unnamed forensics official in its Tuesday edition as saying the plane blew up in midair but that it has yet to be determined whether the blast was caused by the an explosive device or something else. The official further said the remains retrieved so far are "no larger than the size of a hand."

France's aviation accident investigation agency would not comment on anything involving the bodies or say whether any information has surfaced in the investigation to indicate an explosion.

In a search for clues, family members of the victims arrived Tuesday at the Cairo morgue forensics' de-

partment to give DNA samples to help identify the remains of their kin, a security official said. The official also spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters.

Egypt has dispatched a submarine to search for the flight's black boxes and a French ship joined the international effort to locate the wreckage and search for the plane's data recorders.

Ships and planes from Britain, Cyprus, France, Greece and the United States are also taking part in the search for the debris from the aircraft, including the black boxes.

Freddie Gray: Prosecutor criticized after officer acquittal

JULIET LINDERMAN, Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — After two trials and no convictions, Baltimore's top prosecutor is facing criticism that she moved too quickly to file charges against six officers in the death of Freddie Gray without first ensuring there was enough evidence to bring them to bear.

Even the judge overseeing the cases — in his verdict Monday acquitting the latest officer to stand trial in the death of the African-American man — said the state failed to prove its case on any of the charges.

Baltimore Circuit Judge Barry Williams acquitted Officer Edward Nero of the assault, misconduct in office and reckless endangerment charges in connection with Gray's arrest last year outside a West Baltimore housing complex.

Gray died on April 19, 2015, a week after his neck was broken while handcuffed, shackled, but left unrestrained by a seat belt in the back of a police van. The circumstances of his arrest and his subsequent death triggered protests demanding justice for Gray. On the day of his funeral, rioting and looting broke out. The National Guard responded, and a curfew was imposed.

Williams delivered his verdict in the racially charged case before a packed courtroom Monday. Nero's parents and his brother sat in the front row; a few rows away, Gray's stepfather. Noticeably absent, however, was State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby, who was present when Williams declared a mistrial in the trial for Officer William Porter in December.

After announcing charges against the officers last May — one day after receiving the police department's investigation while a tense city was still under curfew — Mosby did not shy from the spotlight. She posed for magazine photos, sat for TV interviews and even appeared onstage at a Prince concert in Gray's honor.

After the acquittal, Nero's lawyers sought to send a strong message to her.

"Officer Edward Nero, his wife and family are elated that this nightmare is finally over," wrote Marc Zayon and Allison Levine in a statement. "The state's attorney for Baltimore city rushed to charge him, as well as the other five officers, completely disregarding the facts of the case and the applicable law. His hope is that the state's attorney will reevaluate the remaining five officers' cases and dismiss their charges."

Mosby spokeswoman Rochelle Ritchie, citing a gag order in the case, declined comment Monday.

David Weinstein, a Florida attorney and former federal civil rights prosecutor, said the verdict will probably serve as a "wake-up call" for prosecutors.

"This speaks to the notion a lot of people had when this first happened, which is that it was a rush to judgment," Weinstein said. "The state's attorney was trying to balance what she had with the public outcry and call to action given the climate in Baltimore and across the U.S. concerning policing, and I think she was overreaching."

Harvard University professor Alan Dershowitz said he believed the judge's verdict was an example of the legal system looking at the facts of the case without being influenced by race or community pressure. He said he "absolutely" believed Mosby overreached in bringing charges against the six officers.

"There's no question she acted irresponsibly," Dershowitz said in a telephone interview. "She acted politically. She acted too quickly, and the public ought to make her pay a price for seeking to distort justice."

Although the judge's ruling referred specifically to Nero's case — the other officers will be tried separately for their alleged roles — he rejected nearly every claim the state made at trial, repeatedly telling prosecutors they'd failed to prove any of the counts beyond a reasonable doubt.

Prosecutors had argued that Nero and colleague Garrett Miller illegally detained and arrested Gray

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without probable cause, and that Nero was reckless when he failed to buckle Gray into a seat belt during the van's second stop blocks from the arrest. Zayon argued Nero wasn't involved in Gray's arrest, having only arrived after the 25-year-old man black man was in handcuffs. As for the seat belt, Zayon said not only was Nero unaware of a newly revised policy requiring officers to buckle in prisoners — the previous policy gave officers discretion based on circumstances — but that it was the van driver's responsibility to make sure Gray was safe.

In his verdict, Williams said he believed Miller, who took the stand as the state's principal witness and testified that he alone detained and handcuffed Gray. The judge told prosecutors they failed to prove Nero did anything wrong. In terms of the arrest that the state alleged was an assault, Williams ruled Nero wasn't involved. As for his failure the buckle Gray in, Williams said there was no proof Nero knew he had a duty to belt the prisoner in, or that he failed to do so on purpose.

"The state's theory from the beginning has been one of negligence, recklessness, and disregard for duty and orders by this defendant," Williams said. "There has been no information presented at this trial that the defendant intended for any crime to happen."

Nero, who is white, was the second of six officers charged to stand trial. The manslaughter case against Porter ended in a mistrial in December when the jury deadlocked. Prosecutors plan to retry him in September.

Warren Brown, a Baltimore attorney who observed much of Nero's trial, said the verdict proved how thin the state's cases are against the officers.

"It was clearly a case where the state decided that come hell or high water they were going to prosecute Nero and Miller, and I think that the ridiculous prosecution was borne out," Brown said. "This thing may extend on and on, quite frankly. It's the prosecution that keeps on giving."

Trial No. 3 — that of van driver Caesar Goodson, who prosecutors believe is most culpable in Gray's death — is set to begin in two weeks. He is charged with second-degree murder.

South Korea: Overseas North Korean restaurant workers flee

KIM TONG-HYUNG, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — An unspecified number of North Koreans working at a Pyongyang-run restaurant overseas have escaped their workplace and will come to South Korea, South Korean officials said Tuesday.

The announcement by Seoul's Unification Ministry came after South Korean media reported that two or three female employees at a North Korean-run restaurant in China fled and went to an unidentified Southeast Asian country earlier this month.

It's the second known group escape by North Korean restaurant workers dispatched abroad in recent weeks. In April, a group of 13 North Koreans who had worked at a North Korean-run restaurant in the eastern Chinese city of Ningbo defected to South Korea.

The latest escapes will likely enrage Pyongyang, which typically accuses Seoul of trying to abduct or entice North Korean citizens to defect. South Korea has denied the accusation.

After the 13 workers — a male manager and 12 waitresses — arrived in Seoul in April, Pyongyang claimed they were kidnapped by South Korean spies and repeatedly demanded their return. South Korea said the workers chose to resettle in the South on their own. It was the largest group defection by North Koreans to the South since North Korean leader Kim Jong Un took power in 2011.

A brief Unification Ministry statement Tuesday confirmed that some other North Korean restaurant workers abroad fled, but didn't elaborate. Officials at the unification and foreign ministries refused to provide further details about the North Koreans and their escapes, citing worries about their safety and potential diplomatic problems with concerned countries. It was unclear when they would arrive in Seoul.

New Focus, a Seoul-based online news outlet run by a North Korean defector, was among the first to break the news Monday. It said the group comprised three women in their 20s who had worked at a North Korean-run restaurant near Shanghai.

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The defector head of New Focus, who uses the pseudonym Jang Jin-sung in interviews because of worries about the safety of relatives left behind in the North, said Tuesday that the information came from people who guided the North Koreans after they escaped from their restaurant. He refused to identify the guides.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported Tuesday that the North Koreans had worked at a restaurant in the central Chinese city of Xian and that they may have traveled to Thailand.

South Korea's spy service said earlier this year that North Korea was running about 130 restaurants overseas, mostly in China. Overall, North Korea has about 50,000-60,000 workers abroad, mostly in Russia and China, with a mission to bring in foreign currency, according to the National Intelligence Service.

South Korean officials believe overseas North Korean restaurants have been suffering economically since stronger international sanctions were applied against North Korea over its nuclear test and long-range rocket launch earlier this year. The restaurant workers who defected to the South in April have said that their restaurant was struggling to meet demands from North Korean authorities at home for foreign currency, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry.

More than 29,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, according to South Korean government data. Many defectors have testified that they wanted to avoid the North's harsh political system and poverty.

In sync: Over 31,000 in China set world dance record

BEIJING (AP) — China's dancing grannies have taken their moves to the record books.

Guinness World Records says more than 31,000 Chinese participants have set a record for mass plaza dancing in multiple locations.

Some 31,697 people in Beijing, Shanghai and four other cities set the new mark on Saturday by performing choreographed dance moves together for more than five minutes, Guinness said on its website.

Participants in Beijing posed with Guinness representatives in front of the city's iconic Bird's Nest stadium.

Generally middle-aged and elderly women, such dancers are a common site in parks, plazas and other public spaces in Chinese cities. While considered a healthy way to exercise and socialize, the performances have sometimes drawn criticism from those living nearby over the loud music accompanying the moves.

As Zika spreads, Florida town a study in bug-borne illness

JENNIFER KAY, Associated Press

RIO, Fla. (AP) — A summer flu seemed to be sweeping through Rachel Heid's riverfront neighborhood. Pale and shaky, she left work with a fever. Neighbors had the same symptoms, and a contractor at her home felt so sick he went to the hospital.

Heid thought the neighborhood children were passing a bug around their circle. She never suspected a virus carried by bugs hovering around their birdbaths and tarp-covered boats — until health officials left pamphlets at their houses asking for blood samples if they recently suffered from fevers and joint or muscle pain.

The dengue fever outbreak infected 28 people in August and September 2013. It caught Florida's Atlantic coast by surprise. The mosquito-borne disease associated with crowded, third-world conditions had spread among the pink plastic flamingoes of Rio (pronounced RYE-oh) and Jensen Beach.

The mosquitoes that spread dengue also carry the Zika virus, which has been linked to serious birth defects and has grown into an epidemic in Central and Latin America — though officials expect only small outbreaks in the United States. The successful fight against dengue in these Florida suburbs may forecast what other U.S. communities worried about Zika face as the summer mosquito season begins. Among the lessons local officials learned: the importance of home inspections by mosquito control technicians, media campaigns to "drain and cover" standing water, and changes residents made in their own yards.

Travelers occasionally come home with dengue, but Florida went 75 years without a local infection until a 2009 outbreak in Key West. The state now records a handful of cases annually, mostly in the densely populated Miami area. Health officials have alerted hospitals to the potential for dengue, but mosquito-borne diseases have rarely worried lifelong Florida residents like Heid.

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"We don't have an international airport here. We don't have a lot of tourism. We don't have a cruise, we don't have a port — nothing. So we don't have the international intake like you would in Miami or the Keys. But yet — we had dengue here," Heid said.

The 2013 outbreak in Martin County seemed like an anomaly — 100 miles north of Miami, in communities with fewer than 15,000 people — but it had the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes that transmit dengue and a traveler who brought home the virus two years earlier.

The last time Heid had thought of mosquitoes as more than pests was in 1990, during a statewide outbreak of mosquito-borne St. Louis encephalitis. Her Martin County high school started playing afternoon football games to avoid bugs biting at dusk, and she remembers the smell of insecticides wafting over as mosquito control trucks passed by.

"When I was a kid, when they would fog, it was heavy," she said. "It smelled like a can of Raid."

She noticed there were fewer chemicals deployed in 2013.

Fogging trucks rumbled down the streets of affected neighborhoods nearly every night for a month, but county employees spent more time — four or five hours daily — on sweeps targeting all small containers holding water where *Aedes aegypti* breed. The biggest offenders: buckets, kiddie pools, recycling bins, convenience-store soda cups, potato chip bags and boats.

"Rio is this old seaside town, you know, a fishing town," said Stephen Noe, a county mosquito control inspector. "Boats were a huge problem."

Maintenance and office workers from the county engineering department joined Noe and five other mosquito control employees for the work. The response drew resources away from mosquito surveillance elsewhere in the county, but for an operation with a budget under \$1 million dollars and only six employees, it was enough to handle the outbreak, said Don Donaldson, the county's engineering director.

Eight people needed hospitalization, but none suffered more severe forms of dengue. Things could have been worse, hospital officials said.

Caught off-guard by the outbreak, blood banks suspended collections in two counties. Officials later determined that was overkill and could have jeopardized a third of Florida's blood supply if dengue had struck a larger county, said OneBlood's chief medical officer, Dr. Rita Reik. New protocols suspend donations only from the ZIP codes immediately affected by mosquito-borne viruses.

Today, all but a handful of hotspots in the outbreak areas remain mostly clear of the discarded containers that attract *Aedes aegypti*, Noe said. "You can't, you know, eradicate totally, but to go from a dozen houses to just two, even three years later, is great," he said.

No one has contracted dengue in Martin County since 2013, even though a neighboring county has since documented local transmission of another virus carried by the same mosquito.

Mosquito-borne disease outbreaks develop from a perfect storm of variables, and there's little evidence supporting the effectiveness of any particular effort to control *Aedes aegypti* or prevent it from spreading diseases, according to researchers.

"You'll have to have an infected person arriving into the community, you'll have to have the vector species in some critical abundance, you'll need people active outdoors — and you can imagine these things happening every day in Florida. Why in particular did it take hold in that location and it doesn't take hold in other locations when you have the same exact circumstance?" said Nathan Burkett-Cadena, who studies how mosquitoes transmit viruses at the University of Florida's medical entomology laboratory.

Mosquito control efforts helped end the 2013 outbreak, but no one can say to what extent, or to what extent similar efforts would prevent or control Zika transmission elsewhere, Burkett-Cadena said.

But people learned something from the dengue outbreak, said Heid, a 39-year-old office manager who now keeps insect repellent by her front door and in her car and adds a capful of bleach when filling a kiddie pool for her dog to cool off.

A few summers ago, she'd be slapping away at mosquitoes while tending to her garden.

"Now it's not as bad because people emptied their birdbaths," she said. "They don't leave standing water. Everyone's conscious that their garbage can lids are flipped. Even planters that have a catch pan for the water — people are emptying those."

Happy birthday, Bartbino! 'Big Sexy' Colon hits the big 4-3

MIKE FITZPATRICK, AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Watching someone wait has rarely been so amusing.

Bartolo Colon will casually flip a baseball back and forth from bare hand to black glove, spinning it by the seams high off his fingertips as the next young hitter — perhaps 20 years his junior — struts toward home plate with serious intentions.

This happens on a major league mound, mind you, in the center of a stadium packed with 40,000 people.

And yet Colon, the roly-poly YouTube sensation wearing a New York Mets uniform, resembles the fill-in starter on any summer Sunday for some rec team in a men's league playing at the public park.

Not a care in the world, it seems.

No fear of Bryce Harper and the Washington Nationals.

"I really love pitching to those good batters," Colon said through a translator last week. "Even if they give me a good whack, I still enjoy just dueling it out with them."

Baseball's ageless ambassador of fun, Colon turned 43 on Tuesday a few hours after pitching the Mets to a 7-1 win at Washington.

He tossed seven crisp innings despite a stiff back that persuaded him to take precautions at the plate. So of course, Colon went right ahead and promised Nationals catcher Wilson Ramos he wasn't going to swing all night.

And he didn't.

Only you, Bartolo. Only you.

Not a boring bone in that body.

His latest birthday seems a fitting time to toast the many unique achievements of a modern-day throwback, a pitcher whose 19-year trek around the majors fills seven pages in the Mets' media guide.

A quick refresher:

— Colon has a Cy Young Award, three All-Star selections and 222 victories, most among active pitchers.

— He went 14 years between playoff wins, then became the oldest pitcher to lose a World Series game.

— He once threw 38 consecutive strikes in a game. Another time, it took him 20 pitches to strike out Ricky Gutierrez.

— He had a career-low 2.65 ERA at age 40, and set a career high with 31 straight scoreless innings at 42.

— He's pitched for the Red Sox and White Sox, both New York teams, in the Cleveland cold and California sun (Angels and Athletics).

— And he's the last Montreal Expo still playing in the majors.

Quite a career for this fan favorite, now the oldest player in the big leagues.

And whether you fancy his stunning home run in San Diego, that behind-the-back toss to first base or when he grabbed his ample belly on the bench with both hands, "Big Sexy" has become the ballplayer most likely to go viral these days.

"He's a big kid, just like the rest of us," said 23-year-old outfielder Michael Conforto, Colon's youngest teammate on the Mets. "It's always fun to see the joy he plays with and he's always got a smile on his face. He's a good energy to have around."

For a No. 5 starter, Colon has made more than his share of headlines this month — and some of them were no laughing matter. Last week, the New York Post reported he was being sued by a woman who alleged the pitcher hadn't paid child support for two children he fathered with her outside his marriage.

Colon declined to comment about "personal stuff" and insisted the story wasn't a distraction.

On the field, of course, he became the oldest player in major league history to hit his first career home run when he connected May 7 against James Shields.

It was a shocking moment of improbable success that charmed nearly everyone but the Padres, especially considering Colon's previous penchant for comically embarrassing swings that sent a Mets helmet flying off his huge head.

The long ball generated such buzz it practically spawned its own cottage industry, from special baseball

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cards to "Bartbino" shirts to one-of-a-kind bobbleheads (with a belly that bobbles, too).

Online you can easily find mash-up spoofs of "The Natural" and a "30 for 30" documentary trailer.

"He's kind of a man of the people, I guess," said Conforto, who grew up hearing stories about a young Colon from travel-team coach Jose Cepeda, the nephew of Hall of Famer Orlando Cepeda.

So what is it that makes Colon, once suspended 50 games for a positive drug test, such a big hit with fans?

"I think it's the total package. I think it's a combination of his age, his size, his unflappability, the fact that his teammates love him," Mets broadcaster Gary Cohen said. "He's somebody who every fan can relate to.

"He's different. He's a one-off and that's what makes him special. There's never been anybody like him," Cohen added, noting "the incredible air of nonchalance" the pitcher occasionally displays even during big league games.

But he's much more than a novel attraction.

Colon has won 33 games in two-plus seasons with the Mets, and his ability to soak up innings has been invaluable to their young staff. He works hard in the gym and provides a positive influence in the clubhouse, manager Terry Collins says, especially for young Latino pitchers like Jeurys Familia and Hansel Robles.

"When he sits down to eat a meal, there's a lot of people at that table," Collins said.

Listed at 5-foot-11 and 283 pounds, the quiet Colon remains quick off the mound and keeps batters off balance with smarts and skill.

He throws his fastball, which averages 88 mph, about 86 percent of the time — by far the most frequently of any starter in the majors. Quite a contrast to all the young fireballers who make up the rest of the Mets' rotation.

Once upon a time, Colon was one of those lightning-armed aces, boasting a 98 mph heater when he first came to the majors in 1997.

"I think the most amazing thing is how he's evolved," Conforto said.

Now, the heavy-set right-hander is an expert at creating late movement. He sinks the ball, runs it, cuts it and paints corners. And he rarely walks anyone.

"There's an athlete inside that body," Nationals manager Dusty Baker said. "That's still the best pitch in baseball, is a well-located fastball — and he's the epitome of it."

Collins, recalling when Colon joined the Mets in 2014, acknowledges he never imagined they'd squeeze this much out of him.

More to come at age 43, too.

"The first time I saw him pitch, I said, 'I don't know how he's going to continue this' — and he has," Collins said. "It's been a marvel to watch."

For all of us.

Sanders: Democratic convention could be 'messy'

KEN THOMAS, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders says the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia and his push to make the party more inclusive could get "messy" but asserts in an interview with The Associated Press: "Democracy is not always nice and quiet and gentle."

The Vermont senator, campaigning Monday ahead of California's primary against Hillary Clinton, said his supporters hope the party will adopt a platform at the summer convention that reflects the needs of working families, the poor and young people, not Wall Street and corporate America.

Sanders said he will "condemn any and all forms of violence" but his campaign was welcoming political newcomers and first-time attendees of party conventions. He said the Democratic Party faces a choice of becoming more inclusive or maintaining the status quo.

"I think if they make the right choice and open the doors to working-class people and young people and create the kind of dynamism that the Democratic Party needs, it's going to be messy," Sanders said.

"Democracy is not always nice and quiet and gentle but that is where the Democratic Party should go."

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Asked if the convention could be problematical, Sanders said: "So what? Democracy is messy. Everyday my life is messy. But if you want everything to be quiet and orderly and allow, you know, just things to proceed without vigorous debate, that is not what democracy is about."

Sanders is vying for support ahead of California's June 7 primary, a day that also includes contests in Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota and South Dakota. Clinton has 271 more pledged delegates than Sanders and is just 90 delegates shy of clinching the nomination when the total includes superdelegates, the party officials and elected leaders who can support the candidate of their choice.

Some Democrats have grown weary about the length of the primaries, worried that it could give Republican businessman Donald Trump a head start on the general election and make it more difficult for Democrats to unite behind a nominee. The issue gained attention when a recent Nevada Democratic convention turned raucous.

Sanders said he was "bothered" by the portrayal of the Las Vegas convention, saying it did not turn violent as some media reports indicated. "There was rowdiness. There was booing, I think inappropriately by the way," he said.

The senator spoke after the Democratic National Committee announced a 15-member platform drafting committee, which will write the first draft of the party platform. The panel includes allies of both candidates.

Sanders said the platform process would be an "excellent time to educate the American people," saying it would allow the party to have a vigorous debate over ways to address wealth inequality, the role of Wall Street in the economy, climate change and universal health care.

"A serious debate about serious issues is good for democracy, is good for the Democratic Party. It will increase voter turnout and that always works in our effort to defeat Republicans," he said.

He declined to entertain the possibility of being considered as Clinton's running mate, saying he was focused on winning the nomination. "If I don't, we will see what happens later on." But he reiterated that he would do "everything that I can" to ensure that Trump is not elected president.

Sanders said he had a "shot" at winning the California primary against Clinton and said, given his delegate deficit, it was "imperative" that he perform well. He estimated his rallies around the state would allow him to speak directly to 200,000 voters before the primary.

"What happens if I win a major victory in California? Will people say, 'Oh, we're really enthusiastic about Hillary Clinton despite the fact that Bernie Sanders has now won whatever it may be, 25 states, half the states?'" he said.

If that happens, he added, superdelegates "may rethink that. That is why you want the process to play out."

Clinton's campaign said Monday she would not participate in a proposed California debate, choosing instead to campaign in the state. Sanders said at an evening rally in Santa Monica he was "disturbed but not surprised" that Clinton had "backed out" of the debate, which was part of an agreement the campaigns reached with the DNC earlier this year.

Sanders also looked ahead to the future of his political movement, saying his goal was "the transformation of the Democratic Party. To be a party which is a grassroots party where the main energy comes from working families, from trade unionists, from environmentalists, from people today who want real political and social and economic and environmental changes in our society."

IS attacks undermine Iraqi state in war weary capital

QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA, Associated Press

SUSANNAH GEORGE, Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Even as Iraq slowly claws back territory from the Islamic State group, faith in the government is crumbling among many, particularly the country's Shiites, angered by political disarray and the continual pounding of the capital, Baghdad, by militants' bombings.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi triumphantly announced the beginning of operations to retake the IS-held city Fallujah, promising over the weekend that "the Iraqi flag will rise high" once more over the city. On

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Monday, Iraqi forces backed by U.S. warplanes battled the militants on the outskirts of Fallujah, a major prize that has been held for more than two years by the Islamic State group.

But in Baghdad, many residents are still reeling from a stunning barrage of suicide attacks the previous week that hit crowded markets, checkpoints a restaurant, a cafe and a gas plant killing more than 200 people, largely in Shiite areas. Rather than sow fear, the attacks seemed to stoke anger, particularly at the political elite.

Hundreds of protesters, including families of victims from the bombings, stormed Baghdad's fortified Green Zone on Friday, demanding better security and government reform. Iraqi forces fired tear gas and live ammunition on the crowds, and the violence left two protesters dead and a number of military personnel wounded in knife attacks. It was the second time in a month that protesters have broken into the zone, where the government is headquartered.

The rising tempers are spilling over into potentially dangerous divisions among Iraq's powerful Shiite militias. The two protests inside the Green Zone were dominated by followers of influential cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who has led a campaign of anti-government protests, initially demanding government reform, but now also calling for accountability in light of security breaches that allowed IS to carry out the wave of recent attacks.

"Woe to the government that kills her own children in cold blood," al-Sadr said in a statement following Friday's clashes.

Al-Sadr's shows of force have also prompted rival militias to deploy in the streets, with each side vowing to protect Iraqis. That has raised fears of frictions or outright violence between the various camps.

Hours after Friday's violence, gunmen in the southern city of Amarah fired on the local headquarters of the Badr Brigade, a militia closely associated with the Interior Ministry and a rival of al-Sadr's. Militia officials accused al-Sadr's fighters of being behind the shooting, which left no casualties.

"There are those who want a fight between the Shiites," said Ali Hassan, a senior official in the Badr Brigade. "But we will not be dragged into that fighting, our only goal now is to fight Daesh," he said using an Arabic acronym for IS.

Divisions among Shiite militias reflect splits among the parties backing them that have gone on for months. Iraq's political leadership has seemed increasingly paralyzed. Al-Abadi's government has been promising reforms to reduce rampant corruption for months but has not come through with them. Parliament has been unable to convene as many lawmakers are refusing to meet, citing security concerns.

Visiting a Shiite shrine to pray for her family's safety, Iktisam Adeeb said the bombings show how the leadership is corrupt and the security forces ineffective.

"Our politicians are just like puppets and someone else is pulling the strings," she said at the Sayyed Idriss shrine, one of several such holy sites in Baghdad revered by Shiites.

Days after she spoke, a rocket hit the shrine complex, damaging an administrative building.

Shiite militias are increasingly stepping in to provide security they accuse the police and army of failing to bring.

After some of the deadliest bombings hit in Sadr City — the large Shiite district in Baghdad that is a stronghold of al-Sadr — the cleric's militia fanned out in the streets of the district.

"There is no confidence in the security forces," said one commander of Saraya al-Salam, or the Peace Brigades, as al-Sadr's militia is called. He spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to talk to the media.

Last month, al-Sadr's supporters swarmed into the Green Zone while security forces did nothing.

Afterward, other Shiite militias — including ones that are strong opponents of al-Sadr — sent their own fighters into the streets in the areas around the Green Zone to keep security.

Aqeel al-Rubaie, who owns a shop just blocks from the Green Zone, said he was shocked by the flood of Shiite fighters.

"I thought the state had collapsed and they were moving in," he said. Now instead of worrying about Islamic State group attacks, he said, "I'm worried about fighting among the Shiites. Everyone has a gun and money, and now they're out in the streets."

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Officials have painted the surge in bombings in the capital as a sign of militants' desperation as they lose ground in the face of Iraqi forces backed by airstrikes from a U.S.-led coalition. Last week, Iraqi state television interrupted normal programming to proclaim a new victory, the retaking of the western town of Rutba, playing patriotic music videos hailing the bravery of the armed forces.

But claims of victory ring hollow for many amid the bloodshed in Baghdad's streets and the disarray in the government.

Hussein Mohammed, 75, a businessman originally from Najaf who was visiting the Sayyid Idriss shrine, said he believes political crisis in Baghdad invites IS attacks.

"The terrorists saw this as an opportunity," he said of a political crisis. "They have exploited these problems."

Baghdad residents have faced bombings for more than a decade now and even grisly attacks leave many aspects of life in the capital unfazed. Even after the recent blasts, restaurants, shopping malls and markets remained full in areas sometimes only a block or two away from the attacks.

But unfazed doesn't mean unafraid. Security precautions have become second nature, deeply entrenched in people's minds and the shape of the city. At the Sayyid Idriss shrine, the mosque itself literally gleams with ceilings decorated with tiny mirror-work and arches covered in intricate tiles. Outside, the complex is encased in a dusty, concrete shell of fortification — ever since the height of sectarian violence following the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, roads leading to the shrine have been blocked off with blast walls, gates and checkpoints.

A slight man with reading glasses hanging around his neck, Mohammed listed the precautions he takes — he avoids restaurants, crowded places, parks.

"It's like I'm not living a full life."

Unnamed 'Oxygen Thief' become self-published success

HILLEL ITALIE, AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The fair-skinned man with the hoodie and dark ski cap sits on a bench outside McNally Jackson Books in downtown Manhattan, where neither patrons nor employees seem aware that he's the author of a work so in demand at the store that it's often out of stock.

Known to his growing fan base as "Anonymous," he has given us one of the more unusual self-published successes: "Diary of an Oxygen Thief," a 147-page fictionalized memoir, or autobiographical novel, depending on how much of this story of a recovering alcoholic and the damage he has inflicted and absorbed you care to believe.

"It has an unusual negative space," says the author, who on email uses the names Tom Wilkinson and Stanley Easyday and prefers to be identified as O2Thief. "It couldn't be more naked, but at the same time ... 'Who the hell is it?' I think it's a very powerful place to write."

Some books catch on immediately, others take their time, but "Oxygen Thief" has really followed the scenic route. First published by the author in 2006, the book has slipped on and off the charts ever since, apparently dependent on the occasional tweet or other online comment. "Oxygen Thief" has been such a homegrown operation that the author not only served as his own editor and cover designer, but has also sold the book in the streets and would personally ship it to retailers, sometimes taking on orders for thousands of copies.

His workload is about to lighten. This year, "Oxygen Thief" cracked the top 20 on both Amazon.com and iTunes, enough to interest literary agent Byrd Leavell and eventually a publisher, Gallery Books, a pop culture imprint of Simon & Schuster that plans to release an e-edition this week and a paper version in mid-June. (Film rights have been acquired by Gotham Group.)

"I monitor the Amazon top 100 regularly, and while many self-published titles make a brief appearance there, a persistent best-seller commands special attention," said Gallery executive editor Jeremie Ruby-Strauss, whose authors have included Tucker Max, Ace Frehley and Grace Jones.

Douglas Singleton, a buyer and manager at McNally Jackson, said the store has sold more than 200

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copies of "Oxygen Thief," the in-house record for a "consignment order." Asked if he has met the author, Singleton said he wasn't sure. He thinks the man who delivers copies of "Oxygen Thief" is the book's writer, but it's been a couple of years since he's seen him.

"We've often talked about the mysterious nature of the person who drops off the book," Singleton said. "I have an email address for him and sometimes I'll contact him and say we're sold out and we need another 20 copies. And I get no answer back. Then I'll be walking behind the register one day and there'll be 20 copies. And one of my co-workers will say, 'Someone dropped off a bag and said it was for you.'"

Mainstream recognition does not mean you will learn more about him, beyond what he includes in the book. Anonymous authors, even ones who meet with reporters, don't do book tours. Ruby-Strauss is counting on social media (the author himself has a website, <http://www.O2thief.com>, and Twitter feed, @O2thief) and expects that he will give telephone interviews.

"The book has such an underground feel to it, a nontraditional promotional campaign focusing on these elements makes perfect sense," the editor said.

As his readers would assume and his accent suggests, the author says he is a native of Ireland, who has lived everywhere from London to Minneapolis, but has spent the past decade in New York. Like the narrator of his book, he has spent much of his professional life in advertising. He declines to give his exact age, but says — plausibly — that he's at least 40.

The author had never attempted a book before "Oxygen Thief," but wanted to give it a try, unsure if or why anyone would care about a man who begins his tale by confiding, "I liked hurting girls." The first half reads like a variation of J.P. Donleavy's "The Ginger Man," the comic saga of a ne'er-do-well and the affairs ruined by his own design. The gods strike back in the second half as the O2Thief falls for a photographer identified as Aisling and eventually learns — or thinks he learns — she is using him for a book about relationships.

"We can't be sure this really happened," the author explained. "It's like a Hitchcockian story — his view of the world."

"When I started the book, I understood immediately why it had captured the spirit of the times," Ruby-Strauss said. "I continued reading, and I discovered it was not the book I thought it was; then I finished reading, only to find my latter revelation was also incorrect. I felt unsettled about the whole thing for several days, which struck me as very promising."

Self-published best-sellers often debate whether to sign on with a traditional publisher, whether the loss of independence is compensated by the security and resources that enable them to focus solely on writing. The O2Thief is happy to try it both ways. He will continue to be his own boss for his next two volumes: "Chameleon on a Kaleidoscope," released in 2012 and yet to attain the popularity of "Oxygen Thief," and the upcoming "Eunuchs and Nymphomaniacs," inspired by what he calls "an inherent incompatibility between the sexes."

He'll consider deals for those books only if "the demand for them also becomes insatiable."

ON BASKETBALL: Green's history may have helped him

TIM REYNOLDS, AP Basketball Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Draymond Green has a history, and in this case it seems to have been helpful. He's a kicker.

Only a minute before the overly excitable Golden State forward kicked Oklahoma City's Steven Adams in the midsection during Game 3 of the Western Conference finals on Sunday night, his leg flailing upward either clumsily or intentionally depending on perspective, he was under the basket as teammate Stephen Curry missed a 3-pointer.

Green went up and tried to tip in the rebound. He missed.

Here's the notable part of that otherwise nondescript play: His right leg went up in similar fashion that time as well, a reaction easily unnoticed because no defender was within reach of his size 15 foot, nobody

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got kicked and nobody ended up in a heap on the court in pain afterward.

So Green has done this before. Lots of times, it turns out. There was an aggregated bunch of clips posted to social media showing Green's legs going all sorts of directions after shots and drives, sometimes making contact and sometimes not. And Green does have a reputation for being aggressive, like most great defenders do. He's the sort of player that doesn't mind being called a pest.

But dirty or suspension-worthy?

In this case, damning video and the fact that he got Adams in the midsection in Game 2 as well notwithstanding, it didn't seem so and the NBA agreed. So after spending the bulk of Monday deliberating what to do next, the decision came down that Green will be eligible to play in Game 4 of the series Tuesday in Oklahoma City.

(By the way, the Thunder lead the series 2-1 — easily overlooked amid Kickgate.)

Predictably and immediately, there was Twitter outrage because Twitter's favorite thing is outrage. Green wasn't suspended, yet Cleveland's Dahntay Jones got a one-game ban just one day earlier for striking Toronto's Bismack Biyombo in the midsection. And the NBA surely knew that letting Green play in Game 4 would get conspiracy theorists to say that the league not having a one-size-fits-all approach was done to favor the champions.

Green is a starter, an elite defender for the Warriors. Golden State needs him.

Jones is a backup who has scored 20 points all season. Cleveland hardly needs him.

Yet in this case, it's Green's history that oddly enough seemed to work in his favor. He's hardly a poster child for good behavior; he leads the NBA in postseason technicals this year, and tied for third-most in the regular season in that department. He's also one more flagrant away from an automatic suspension in these playoffs. But for now, he plays on.

"During a game, players — at times — flail their legs in an attempt to draw a foul," NBA Executive Vice President for Basketball Operations Kiki VanDeWeghe said in the release announcing the league's decision on Green.

He's right, but that might not have been what this was.

This seemed like just more crazy-leggedness from Green.

He didn't get away scot-free. The foul was upgraded to a flagrant-2 and will cost Green \$25,000. The upgrade to the flagrant-2 was the NBA's way of saying he should have been ejected Sunday, although making him stick around for the rest of Oklahoma City's 133-105 win was probably a harsher punishment than getting to watch it from the sanctity of the locker room would have been.

The Thunder were phenomenal in Game 3. Oklahoma City coach Billy Donovan has more than held his own against Rick Carlisle, Gregg Popovich and Steve Kerr — all champion coaches, all coaches of the year — so far in his first NBA playoffs. Kevin Durant and Russell Westbrook are playing off each other maybe as well as ever. A different role player seems to step up nightly, Adams included.

They have the Warriors in trouble, without question.

But of course, Green kicking Adams in the midsection wound up being a much bigger story than the Thunder kicking the Warriors in the mouth. And if Green and his teammates don't figure out a solution soon, they'll be kicking themselves while the Thunder play in the NBA Finals.

Cosby due in court in Pennsylvania sex-assault case

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Bill Cosby is due in Pennsylvania court Tuesday morning for a key hearing in his criminal sex-assault case.

The preliminary hearing will determine whether prosecutors have enough evidence to send the 78-year-old entertainer to trial.

Cosby is accused of drugging and molesting former Temple University employee Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia mansion in 2004. Prosecutors said Constand was not only impaired, but unconscious after Cosby gave her three unidentified blue pills. Cosby said they engaged in consensual sexual activities, and that he was a friend and mentor to her.

Prosecutors reopened the criminal case last year after dozens of women raised similar claims, and Cosby's deposition in Constand's lawsuit surfaced.

Constand had gone to him for career advice. Cosby said he gave her the pills to address her stress.

He settled her lawsuit for an undisclosed sum in 2006, after giving four days of testimony about his extramarital affairs, his pursuit of quaaludes to seduce women and his efforts to hide payments to former lovers from his wife.

The confidential settlement bound both sides to secrecy, but a federal judge last year unsealed portions of Cosby's deposition on a petition from The Associated Press. The full deposition was later released by a court reporting service.

Montgomery County prosecutors then reopened Constand's decade-old complaint last summer, after realizing the 12-year window for felony sexual assault had not yet run out.

Cosby has not entered a plea since his Dec. 30 arrest. He would do so at a formal arraignment if the case is held for trial. He is being held on \$1 million bail.

Cosby also is fighting defamation lawsuits across the country for allegedly smearing accusers and is trying to get his homeowners' insurance to pay his legal bills.

Constand is now a massage therapist in Toronto. It's not known if she will testify Tuesday or if police will instead read her statement about the encounter that night.

Cosby faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted of aggravated indecent assault.

Head of TSA security operations removed from position

ALICIA A. CALDWELL, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A House committee said Monday that the head of security operations at the Transportation Security Administration has been replaced.

"Kelly Hoggan has been removed from his position as head of security at TSA," the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform posted on Twitter.

Meanwhile, The Associated Press obtained a memo sent by TSA Administrator Peter Neffenger that does not mention Hoggan but names a temporary replacement.

"Darby LaJoye will serve as the Acting Assistant Administrator of the Office of Security Operations," Neffenger wrote in the memo addressed to TSA senior leaders. "Darby LaJoye is an experienced Federal Security Director with successful leadership tours at two of the nation's largest airports, Los Angeles International Airport in California and John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York."

The oversight committee said Hoggan received more than \$90,000 in bonuses over a period from late 2013 to late 2014.

About a year later, a report from the Homeland Security Inspector General's office revealed that agency employees failed to find explosives, weapons and other dangerous items in more than 95 percent of covert tests at multiple U.S. airports.

That report and allegations of other mismanagement within TSA have drawn congressional scrutiny and promoted multiple hearings on Capitol Hill.

Hoggan's ouster also comes amid growing concerns of massive security lines at airports this summer. The long lines have been blamed in part on more travelers during the busy summer travel season and a shortage of screening officers manning checkpoints.

Neffenger has also attributed some security line woes to fewer people than anticipated applying for the government's PreCheck program, which allows passengers to move through security faster after submitting to a background check.

In recent weeks there have been reports of thousands of people missing flights because of the lengthy wait times. Problems have been reported in Chicago and Neffenger last week was in the city meeting with local officials to discuss the problems.

In his memo Monday, Neffenger said, "At Chicago O'Hare International Airport, a new leadership team is now overseeing screening operations."

He said that and other adjustments, including the LaJoye appointment, "will enable more focused leadership and screening operations at critical airports in the national transportation system."
The TSA did not say where Hoggan has been reassigned.

Pavelski scores twice, Sharks top Blues to take 3-2 lead

R.B. FALLSTROM, AP Sports Writer

ST. LOUIS (AP) — All the time Joe Pavelski has spent practicing his stick work has paid off big for the San Jose Sharks.

And the Sharks captain has his team on the brink of their first trip to the Stanley Cup Final.

"You think back to some of the best scorers ever, his ability to get his stick on pucks in front of the net from different angles is as good as anybody I've ever seen," coach Peter DeBoer said. "His biggest asset is he works at it."

With the Sharks trailing by a goal, Pavelski tied the game late in the second period and then scored the go-ahead goal in the opening minute of the third period in the Sharks' 6-3 victory over the St. Louis Blues for a 3-2 lead in Western Conference final on Monday night.

"You play a good game like that, you want to ride that," Pavelski said. "Everyone's played a key role so far and it's going to have to continue."

Joel Ward also scored twice, including one of two empty-netters, in the final minute for San Jose, which can close out the series at home on Wednesday night. Joe Thornton had three assists.

"We just keep coming. We're not going to give up and they're not going to give up," Thornton said. "Both teams, we're here for a reason."

The Sharks had a strong response after losing 6-3 in Game 4 in San Jose.

"We've done it all season, all playoff run," forward Logan Couture said. "If we get down, the bench stays pretty even, pretty calm."

Pavelski leads all players in the playoffs with 12 goals and has three two-goal games, one in each series. The Sharks' captain added an assist and is tied with Couture for the postseason points lead, each with a franchise-record 21 points.

"It's good to see Sharks up there," Couture said.

Rookie Robby Fabbri scored and David Backes had an assist for St. Louis. Both were questionable coming off injuries in Game 4.

But star forward Vladimir Tarasenko was silent again. Tarasenko was minus-2 with one shot and is scoreless in the series after getting seven goals and 13 points in the first two rounds.

"He's struggled this series," coach Ken Hitchcock said. "He hasn't gotten the looks that he normally gets. But he's one shift away from breaking it open."

The Blues are just 4-6 at home in the postseason, and failed to hold leads of 2-1 and 3-2 in Game 5. They're 6-3 on the road and need another win to bring the series home for Game 7.

"We did it in Game 4," Backes said. "Now, we've got to go in there and do it again."

The Sharks are 6-2 at home in the postseason and need one more win to reach the Cup Final.

"I think we're reminding them we're not there yet," DeBoer said. "There's a lot of heavy lifting yet."

The Sharks were 2 for 3 on the power play after entering 2 for 15 in the series.

Troy Brouwer batted in a rebound from midair for St. Louis and Ward scored a similar goal for San Jose with his first of the game.

Brouwer leads St. Louis with eight goals in 19 games this postseason after totaling seven in his first 78 playoff games.

Pavelski was left alone in the slot on a power play at 18:33 of the second and beat Jake Allen to tie it at 3-3. He redirected Brent Burns' drive from the point 16 seconds into the third to put the Sharks in front to stay.

San Jose goalie Martin Jones allowed three goals on the Blues' first 13 shots, but stopped all seven shots in the third period.

"He's a great goalie," defenseman Roman Polak said. "He's mentally strong. No matter what happened

in the first or second, it doesn't matter."

Blues goalie Jake Allen made 21 saves in his second straight start of the postseason. Hitchcock said he hadn't decided whether Allen or Brian Elliott would start in Game 6.

"Numbers aren't my thing," Allen said. "Never have been, never will be. Wins are all that matter right now."

The Sharks scored first on Marc-Edouard Vlasic's first goal of the postseason from the point at 3:51 of the first period.

Jaden Schwartz snapped a 13-game goal drought to tie it on a rebound at 7:04 of the first.

Refugees and scholars: Colleges offer war-torn a route to US

COLLIN BINKLEY, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Colleges in the U.S. are opening their doors — and their financial aid — to Syrian refugees. Over the past year, at least a dozen schools have promised to cover full or partial tuition for Syrian refugees who are accepted for enrollment. They join a coalition of more than 60 colleges that have started providing scholarships to Syrian students since the country's civil war began in 2011.

So far, colleges have awarded scholarships to more than 150 Syrian students. It's an effort organized by the Institute of International Education, a nonprofit group that offers financial help to students who are displaced by violence and natural disasters.

Among more than 11 million Syrians who have fled their homes, the institute estimates that at least 100,000 are qualified to attend college but have few options to do so.

"We've never really had those numbers before," said Allan Goodman, president of the institute. "The Syrian civil war is more complicated and at a much larger scale than any other crisis."

To help refugees resume their studies, an initial wave of schools volunteered to offer financial aid soon after war broke out. Since then, many have followed amid pressure from their students.

The University of Southern California is offering to pay full tuition for as many as six refugees starting next year. Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania pledged to cover \$25,000 a year for five more.

Graduate students at USC had pushed the university to offer scholarships for several months before the administration agreed. Tufts University near Boston joined the coalition in late 2013 after a student government called for it. At Davidson College in North Carolina, officials said they learned about the effort only after students brought it to their attention. The private school pledged financial aid to Syrian students last month.

"This is largely driven by our students," said Kaye-Lani Laughna, the international admission officer at Davidson. "I'm hopeful that we'll be able to welcome a Syrian student in the next year."

The coalition includes colleges in some states whose governors tried to block Syrian refugees last year, including in North Carolina, New Jersey and Ohio. Experts said they hadn't heard of any universities taking a similar stand against refugees.

Mohamad Bassel Khair, 28, fled Damascus after explosions and firefights became routine. After going to Egypt, where he and his wife couldn't legally work, Khair heard about scholarships at New Jersey's Montclair State University and decided to apply.

"They gave me a full scholarship, including rooming," Khair said. "They were so helpful for me."

He is graduating with a master's in nutrition and food science and is now seeking asylum in the U.S. for his family, including a 2-year-old son.

At least one college, though, questions whether it's legal to earmark financial aid for Syrian students. The University of Colorado Boulder rejected a petition asking to create scholarships for Syrian students, saying it would violate a federal law banning discrimination based on national origin. The school says it already offers other financial aid to help international students, including Syrians.

Officials at the Institute of International Education countered that other schools have offered scholarships for Syrian students without facing legal action, and they expect others to follow. Daniel Obst, a deputy vice president at the institute, said that more than 230 colleges recently agreed to waive tuition for at least one Syrian student if the institute can find other sources of money for airfare and lodging.

The number of Syrians studying at U.S. colleges has risen steadily in recent years but is still relatively low compared with other countries in the region. There were 800 Syrians enrolled in 2015, compared with 9,000 from Kuwait. Demand from Syrians has been lower, experts say, in part because they had a strong education system of their own before war broke out. Now, many Syrian schools have closed or been destroyed.

Along with offering financial aid, some U.S. colleges are also loosening their admission requirements to help bring refugees. Instead of measuring students' English language skills through standardized tests that carry fees, some schools are offering online interviews instead. Some are accepting scanned copies of academic transcripts if the original has been lost.

And some schools are also making room for refugees at their overseas branches. In March, Bard College announced three full scholarships for Syrian students at its Berlin campus. Meanwhile, the European Union recently announced 400 new scholarships for Syrian students, and colleges in Europe have also started offering financial aid to refugees.

But the demand still far exceeds what schools can offer. Thousands of Syrians typically apply for each new batch of scholarships, said Goodman, the institute's president.

"We have to try," he said. "The price to the world of having a lost generation is just incalculable, and it's all bad."

Smaller cities across US opening high-tech crime centers

DAVE COLLINS, Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — Live video feeds from cameras across Hartford, Connecticut, light up a wall of flat-screen monitors in a high-tech room at the city's old police department, while computers take in data from license plate readers and a gunshot detection system.

The department's new Real-Time Crime and Data Intelligence Center, unveiled by city officials in February, helps officers on the streets find suspects and avoid harm by quickly giving them crucial information, police officials say.

Although open only a few months, the center has assisted officers in hundreds of criminal cases that have resulted in arrests, said Sgt. Johnmichael O'Hare, who leads the operation.

"It's huge," he said about the new capabilities. "It provides them real-time intelligence."

New York City opened the first-of-its-kind Real Time Crime Center in 2005, and other large cities followed suit. Smaller cities are now opening their own centers after acquiring surveillance cameras, gunshot detectors and other technology.

Real time crime centers have opened in the past year in Hartford; Wilmington, Delaware; and Springfield, Massachusetts. Others are in the works in Bridgeport, Connecticut; Modesto, California; and Wilmington, North Carolina.

Staff members at the centers are able to monitor surveillance video and tell officers at crime scenes about suspects' movements. They enter names into criminal and private company databases and relay virtual dossiers on people to police. They also tap into surveillance cameras at schools and businesses — after getting permission in a process agreed upon beforehand — to help police respond to active shooters and other crimes. Much of the information, including video feeds, is sent to officers' cellphones.

The centers reflect law enforcement's growing reliance on technology, which in turn has raised some privacy concerns from civil liberties advocates. Many cities are using federal grants and drug forfeiture money to help pay for the centers, which can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to set up.

The American Civil Liberties Union says there is a lack of general rules to limit privacy invasions and abuse of surveillance technology by police. The ACLU also is concerned about how long police departments retain camera footage and other surveillance data.

"The public really needs to be consulted and there needs to be a debate," said David McGuire, legislative and policy director of the ACLU of Connecticut, which is keeping an eye on real time crime centers in the state.

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In December, the ACLU of Northern California criticized Fresno police for using social media surveillance software without the public's consent. One software program, the ACLU said, suggested identifying potential threats to public safety by tracking hashtags related to the Black Lives Matter movement. Another program assigned "threat levels" to residents, the ACLU said.

Police told The Fresno Bee newspaper that they were only testing the software during free trials for possible use against violent crime and terrorism, and were not tracking Black Lives Matter on social media.

Civil liberties advocates also have concerns about airports and how many police departments are now using facial recognition software to track and identify people, saying such software is known for mistakes.

The Hartford center doesn't use facial recognition, but officials say that could come in the future.

Police Chief James Rovella said city authorities are dedicated to respecting people's civil rights.

On a recent day, a crime analyst at the Hartford center reviewed surveillance video of a man firing a gun at someone in a playground, then running into a nearby house. The house's address was visible, and she did a computer search on whether anyone in the house had a criminal record. The search came back with a booking photo of the shooting suspect, and he was later arrested, police said.

"It's such a great asset having everybody under one roof," said O'Hare. "It's all about transfer of information."

Obama's Hiroshima visit stirs differing views across Pacific

MARI YAMAGUCHI, Associated Press

JULIE WATSON, Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Two very different visions of the hell that is war are seared into the minds of World War II survivors on opposite sides of the Pacific.

Michiko Kodama saw a flash in the sky from her elementary school classroom on Aug. 6, 1945, before the ceiling fell and shards of glass from blown-out windows slashed her. Now 78, she has never forgotten the living hell she saw from the back of her father, who dug her out after a U.S. military plane dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan.

People were walking like zombies, with their flesh scraped and severely burned, asking for help, for water. A little girl looked up, straight into Michiko's eyes, and collapsed.

Lester Tenney saw Japanese soldiers killing fellow American captives on the infamous Bataan Death March in the Philippines in 1942. "If you didn't walk fast enough, you were killed. If you didn't say the right words you were killed, and if you were killed, you were either shot to death, bayoneted, or decapitated," the 95-year-old veteran said. He still has the bamboo stick Japanese soldiers used to beat him across the face.

Different experiences, different memories are handed down, spread by the media and taught in school. Collectively, they shape the differing reactions in the United States and Japan to Barack Obama's decision to become the first sitting American president to visit the memorial to atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima later this week.

The U.S. dropped a second atomic bomb on Nagasaki three days after Hiroshima, and Japan surrendered six days later, bringing to an end a bloody conflict that the U.S. was drawn into after Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

Japan identifies mostly as "a victim rather than a victimizer," Stephen Nagy, an international relations professor at the International Christian University in Tokyo, said. "I think that represents Japan's regional role and its regional identity, whereas the United States has a global identity, a global agenda and global presence. So when it views the bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, it's in the terms of a global narrative, a global conflict the United States was fighting for freedom or to liberate countries from fascism or imperialism. To make these ends meet is very difficult."

A poll last year by the Pew Research Center found that 56 percent of Americans believe the use of nuclear weapons was justified, while 34 percent do not. In Japan, 79 percent said the bombs were unjustified, and only 14 percent said they were.

Terumi Tanaka, an 84-year-old survivor of the Nagasaki bombing, said of Obama: "I hope he will give

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an apology to the atomic bomb survivors, not necessarily to the general public. There are many who are still suffering. I would like him to meet them and tell them that he is sorry about the past action, and that he will do the best for them."

The White House has clearly ruled out an apology, which would inflame many U.S. veterans and others, and said that Obama would not revisit the decision to drop the bombs.

"A lot of these people are telling us we shouldn't have dropped the bomb — hey, what they talking about?" said Arthur Ishimoto, a veteran of the Military Intelligence Service, a U.S. Army unit made up of mostly Japanese-Americans who interrogated prisoners, translated intercepted messages and went behind enemy lines to gather intelligence.

Now 93, he said it's good for Obama to visit Hiroshima to "bury the hatchet," but there's nothing to apologize for. Ishimoto, who was born in Honolulu and rose to be an Air Force major general and commander of the Hawaii National Guard, believes he would have been killed in an invasion of Japan if Japan had not surrendered.

"It would have been terrible," he said. "There is going to be controversy about apologizing. I don't think there should be any apology. ... We helped that country. We helped them out of the pits all the way back to one of the most economically advanced. There's no apology required."

Beyond the deaths — the atomic bombs killed 140,000 people in Hiroshima and 73,000 in Nagasaki by the end of 1945 — the effects of radiation have lingered with survivors, both physically and mentally.

Kodama, the Hiroshima schoolgirl, faced discrimination in employment and marriage. After her first love failed because her boyfriend's family said they didn't want "radiated people's blood in their family," she married into a more understanding one.

The younger of her two daughters died of cancer in 2011. Some say she shouldn't have given birth, even though multi-generational radiation effects have not been proven.

Obama doesn't have to apologize, Kodama said, but he should take concrete actions to keep his promise to seek a nuclear-free world.

"For me, the war is not over until the day I see a world without nuclear weapons," she said. "Mr. Obama's Hiroshima visit is only a step in the process."

Nagasaki survivor Tanaka views the atomic bombings as a crime against humanity. A promise by Obama to survivors to do all he can for nuclear disarmament "would mean an apology to us," he said.

He added that his own government also should take some of the blame for the suffering of atomic bomb victims. "It was the Japanese government that started the war to begin with, and delayed the surrender," he said, adding that Japan has not fully faced up to its role in the war.

Japan did issue apologies in various forms in the 1980s and 1990s, but some conservative politicians in recent years have raised questions about them, said Sven Saaler, a historian at Sophia University in Tokyo.

"In particular right now when Japan has a government that is ... backpedaling in terms of apologizing for the war, if now the U.S. apologized, that also would be, I think, a weird signal in this current situation," Saaler said.

Tenney, one of only three remaining POWs from the Bataan Death March, wants Obama in Hiroshima to remember all those who suffered in the war, not just the atomic bomb victims.

"From my point of view, the fact that the war ended when it did and the way it did, it saved my life and it saved the life of those Americans and other allied POWs that were in Japan at the time," he said at his home in Carlsbad, California. "I was in Japan, shoveling coal in a coal mine. No one ever apologized for that. ... I end up with black lung disease because they didn't take care of me in the coal mine, and yet there is no apology, no words of wisdom, no nothing."

Obama's visit is firmly supported by Earl Wineck, who scanned the skies over Alaska for Japanese war-planes during World War II.

"He's not going there like some of them might, and keep reminding them of all their transgressions," the 88-year-old veteran of the Alaska Territorial Guard said. "That should have ended after the war, and I think a lot of it did, but of course, there's always people who feel resentment."

Japan occupied two Alaskan islands during the war. The battle to retake one of them, Attu Island, cost

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about 3,000 lives on both sides.

"We hated them," Wineck said "But things change, people change, and I think people in the world should be closer together."

How so?

One Tokyo high school student has a suggestion. Mayu Uchida, who said she cried when she heard survivors recount their memories on a school trip to Hiroshima, wants Obama to bring home what he learns and tell any supporters of nuclear weapons how horrifying they are.

"He could also suggest, promoting opportunities for more Americans to visit Hiroshima, or to hear the story of Hiroshima," the 18-year-old said. "It will be even better if those opportunities are available for younger generations like us."

Asian markets down slightly as investors wait for Fed

YURI KAGEYAMA, AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian stock markets were down slightly in subdued trading Tuesday amid anticipation the U.S. Federal Reserve may raise interest rates in June.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 slipped 0.5 percent in early trading to 16,566.23 as the yen continued to strengthen, putting a dampener on export issues. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was virtually unchanged, inching down less than 0.1 percent at 5,318.00. South Korea's Kospi edged down 0.4 percent to 1,947.41. Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 0.2 percent to 19,765.32 while the Shanghai Composite index slid 0.5 percent to 2,830.13.

WALL STREET: The Dow Jones industrial average fell 8.01 points, or 0.05 percent, to 17,492.93. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 4.28 points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,048.04, and the Nasdaq composite lost 3.78 points, or 0.1 percent, to 4,765.78.

WAITING ON THE FED: Investors are seeking clues on whether the U.S. Federal Reserve will raise interest rates next month. That would depend on the assessment as to the resilience of the U.S. economy, which in effect impacts global growth. Several members of the Federal Reserve will be making speeches this week, which may give insight on what Fed policymakers might do at their meeting in June.

THE QUOTE: "Fed's rhetoric keeps rate hike in summer live," Cynthia Jane Kalasopatan, of Mizuho Bank's Singapore Treasury Division, wrote in an email to subscribers. "The rate hike is viewed as necessary as inflation is expected to rise on wage pressures."

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude shed 15 cents to \$47.93 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 23 cents to \$48.12 a barrel in London.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 109.25 yen from 109.81 yen and the euro fell to \$1.1213 from \$1.1239.

Many Vietnam vets say they support lifting of arms embargo

TAMMY WEBBER, Associated Press

CHRIS CAROLA, Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — The way Terry Neilen sees it, lifting the ban on U.S. arms sales to Vietnam makes sense in the face of China's growing influence in the region.

Fellow Vietnam veteran Ned Foote said Americans long ago forgave Germany and Japan for World War II, so there's no reason not to do the same with Vietnam.

"We're actually acting as a team in a sense," said Neilen, of Saratoga Springs, New York, who served in the Army infantry in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968. "They're joining together to give a show of strength."

Foote, who heads the New York State Council of Vietnam Veterans of America, noted that the Vietnamese have helped account for missing American service members.

President Barack Obama's decision to lift the half-century-old arms embargo was seen Monday by many veterans as a logical outgrowth of efforts to normalize relations between the U.S. and the southeast Asian nation that has become a major trading partner since the war ended in 1975.

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Obama, looking to bolster a government regarded as a crucial ally in the region, vowed to leave behind the troubled history between the former enemies and embrace a new era. He steered clear of any condemnation of Vietnam for its treatment of dissidents.

"The war's over," said Bernard Edelman, deputy director of government affairs for the Vietnam Veterans of America.

He said the organization has not taken an official position on the president's action, but he compared it to U.S. efforts after World War II to normalize relations with Japan, Germany, Austria and Italy.

"We've tried to build bridges to the Vietnamese," Edelman said, while acknowledging that people "whom I know and love and respect might be angry at what the president's doing."

Robert Turner, 68, of North Andover, Massachusetts, said he is "totally opposed" to allowing arms sales to Vietnam.

"We thought we were fighting communism, and now they want to give them arms," said Turner, who served in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968. "I'm not over it yet."

Al Huber, 69, is president of the Illinois state council of the Vietnam Veterans of America. He said he's not worried about whether that country gets weapons, but he doesn't think Obama's decision to lift the embargo near the end of his presidency "serves any purpose except his personal agenda."

Obama said the move would ensure Vietnam can defend itself but denied it was in response to territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea. China has warned the U.S. not to take sides, and Obama said the nation supports a diplomatic resolution.

Still, human rights activists and some American lawmakers had urged Obama to press Vietnam's communist leadership to offer greater freedoms before lifting the embargo. Vietnam holds about 100 political prisoners, and there have been more detentions this year. Some rank-and-file veterans echoed those concerns.

"They have plenty of human rights violations to account for, and I don't feel it's really appropriate to provide arms to them until we can see they're more in line with our ... way of human rights," said Air Force veteran Jesse Hawk of Marietta, Georgia, who served in Vietnam from 1971 to 1973.

He acknowledged China's growing influence but added, "Until there's any kind of action, there's no need to go providing arms to a country that still has their own problems to deal with when you don't know if it'll be used against their own people."

Cliff Stone, of North Andover, Massachusetts, said he served in the first cavalry in Vietnam and he fears that arming the country could create a conflict with China.

"We're supposed to be making peace with China, yet we will supply Vietnam with weapons. What sense does that make?" Stone said.

Obama did not say how soon arms sales might begin. He said each deal would be reviewed individually.

Neither the American Legion nor the Veterans of Foreign Wars has taken a position on the embargo, officials said.

But under a resolution adopted two years ago, the American Legion opposes the sale of long-range ballistic missiles, as well as nuclear or biological weapons, to communist nations, spokesman John Raughter said.

The group recognizes "that the president must be the chief architect of U.S. foreign policy," said Raughter, adding that the organization would "study the situation very carefully" and discuss it at its national convention this summer.

"We realize there are a lot of factors at play, including China ... but we also remain concerned about the human rights situation in Vietnam."

Army veteran Willie Guzman, who served in Vietnam from 1969 to 1971, said that, as commander in chief, Obama had the right to lift the embargo.

"They're an ally of ours now," he said. "I think they should be able to work together as a unit, you know, so we can help protect the freedom of that country as well."

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Arizona city bars Satanic Temple prayer at council meeting

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) — Officials say Scottsdale will bar the Satanic Temple from leading a scheduled prayer at a City Council meeting in July.

City spokesman Kelly Corsette says Scottsdale informed the Satanic Temple's Arizona chapter that only representatives from institutions that have a substantial connection to the Scottsdale community will be allowed to give the invocation.

Scottsdale now is making other arrangements for the July 6 invocation.

Satanic Temple spokesman Stu de Haan says the city has twice approved plans for the invocation — first for April 5 and then for July 6 when the group had to reschedule for logistical reasons.

De Haan learned about Scottsdale's decision Monday afternoon. He says it's too early to say what the group might do next.

The Satanic Temple's Arizona chapter is based in Tucson.

Today in History

The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, May 24, the 145th day of 2016. There are 221 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 24, 1844, Samuel F.B. Morse transmitted the message "What hath God wrought" from Washington to Baltimore as he formally opened America's first telegraph line.

On this date:

In 1775, John Hancock was elected President of the Continental Congress, succeeding Peyton Randolph.

In 1883, the Brooklyn Bridge, linking Brooklyn and Manhattan, was dedicated by President Chester Alan Arthur and New York Gov. Grover Cleveland.

In 1935, the first major league baseball game to be played at night took place at Cincinnati's Crosley Field as the Reds beat the Philadelphia Phillies, 2-1.

In 1937, in a set of rulings, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Social Security Act of 1935.

In 1941, the German battleship Bismarck sank the British battle cruiser HMS Hood in the North Atlantic, killing all but three of the 1,418 men on board.

In 1959, former U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles died in Washington, D.C. at age 71.

In 1962, astronaut Scott Carpenter became the second American to orbit the Earth as he flew aboard Aurora 7.

In 1966, the Jerry Herman musical comedy "Mame," starring Angela Lansbury, opened on Broadway.

In 1976, Britain and France opened trans-Atlantic Concorde supersonic transport service to Washington.

In 1980, Iran rejected a call by the World Court in The Hague to release the American hostages.

In 1991, the feminist film drama "Thelma & Louise," starring Susan Sarandon (as Louise) and Geena Davis (as Thelma) was released by MGM.

In 2001, 23 people were killed when the floor of a Jerusalem wedding hall collapsed beneath dancing guests, sending them plunging several stories into the basement.

Ten years ago: In rare, election-year harmony, House Republican and Democratic leaders jointly demanded the FBI return documents taken in a Capitol Hill raid as part of a bribery investigation of U.S. Rep. William Jefferson, D-La. (President George W. Bush ordered the documents placed under temporary seal; Jefferson was later found guilty of bribery and sentenced to 13 years in federal prison.) "An Inconvenient Truth," a documentary about former Vice President Al Gore's campaign against global warming, went into limited release. Taylor Hicks was named the new "American Idol" over runner-up Katharine McPhee.

Five years ago: Egyptian authorities ordered former President Hosni Mubarak tried on charges of corruption as well as conspiracy in the deadly shooting of protesters who'd driven him from power. (Mubarak was ultimately found guilty of corruption, and is facing retrial on charges related to the deaths of protesters.) President Barack Obama was honored with a state dinner in London as he continued his visit to Britain.

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Oprah Winfrey taped the final episode of her long-running talk show.

One year ago: Conservative challenger Andrzej Duda (AHN'-zh-ray DOO'-dah) won Poland's presidential election, ousting the incumbent, Bronislaw Komorowski (kah-mah-RAWF'-skee), in a runoff vote. The 68th Cannes Film Festival concluded with French filmmaker Jacques Audiard's (OH'-dee-ahr) Sri Lankan refugee drama taking the coveted top honor, the Palme d'Or. Juan Pablo Montoya sliced his way from the back to the front twice to win his second Indianapolis 500.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-comedian-impressionist Stanley Baxter is 90. Jazz musician Archie Shepp is 79. Comedian Tommy Chong is 78. Singer Bob Dylan is 75. Actor Gary Burghoff is 73. Singer Patti LaBelle is 72. Actress Priscilla Presley is 71. Country singer Mike Reid is 69. Actor Jim Broadbent is 67. Actor Alfred Molina is 63. Singer Rosanne Cash is 61. Actor Cliff Parisi (TV: "Call the Midwife") is 56. Actress Kristin Scott Thomas is 56. Rock musician Jimmy Ashhurst (Buckcherry) is 53. Rock musician Vivian Trimble is 53. Actor John C. Reilly is 51. Actor Dana Ashbrook is 49. Actor Eric Close is 49. Actor Carl Payne is 47. Rock musician Rich Robinson is 47. Actor Dash Mihok is 42. Actor Bryan Greenburg is 38. Actor Owen Benjamin is 36. Actor Billy L. Sullivan is 36. Actor-rapper Jerod Mixon (aka Big Tyme) is 35. Rock musician Cody Hanson (Hinder) is 34. Dancer Mark Ballas (TV: "Dancing with the Stars") is 30. Country singer Billy Gilman is 28. Rapper/producer G-Eazy is 27. Actor Cayden Boyd is 22.

Thought for Today: "Responsibility educates." — Wendell Phillips, American abolitionist (1811-1884).